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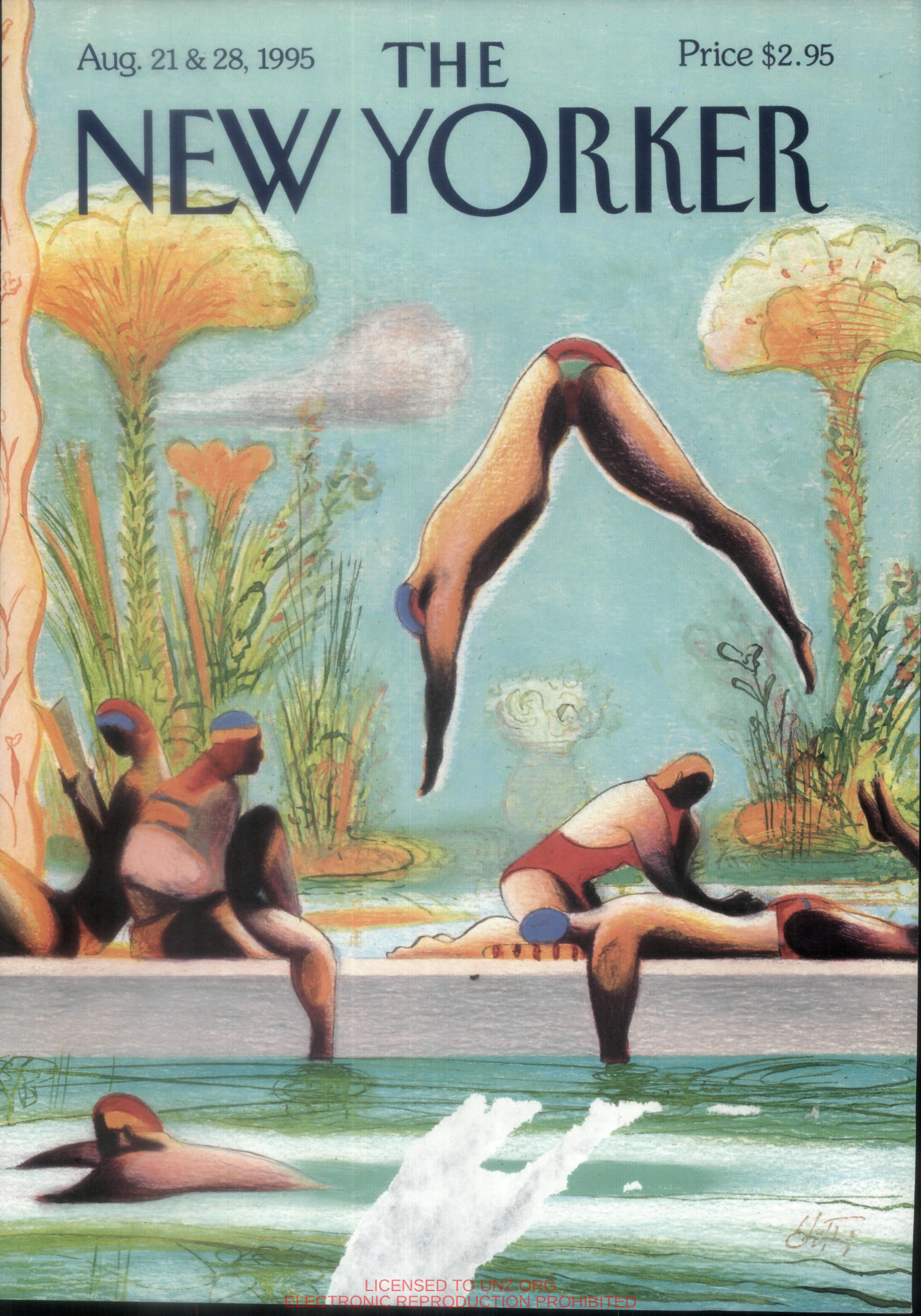

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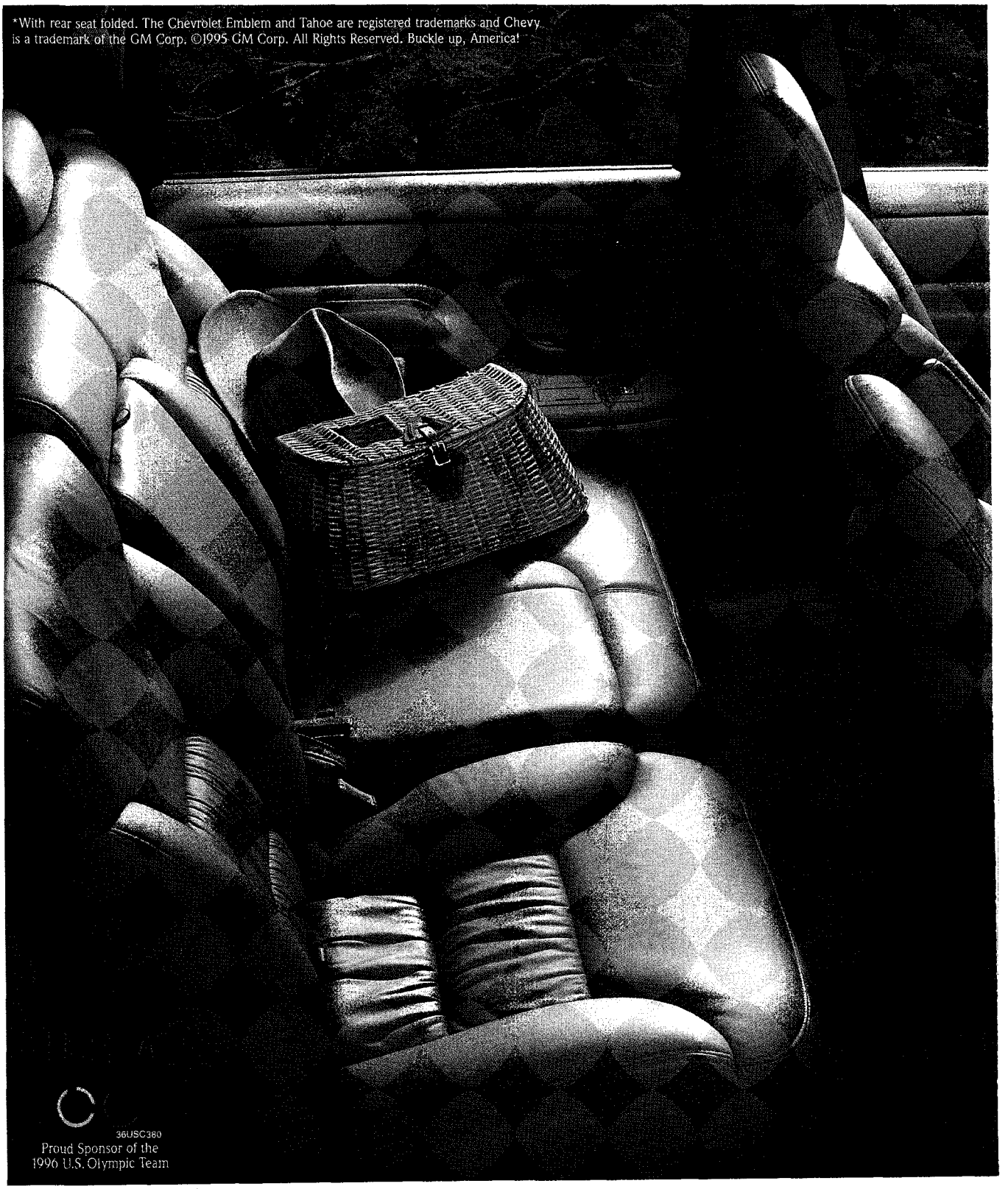

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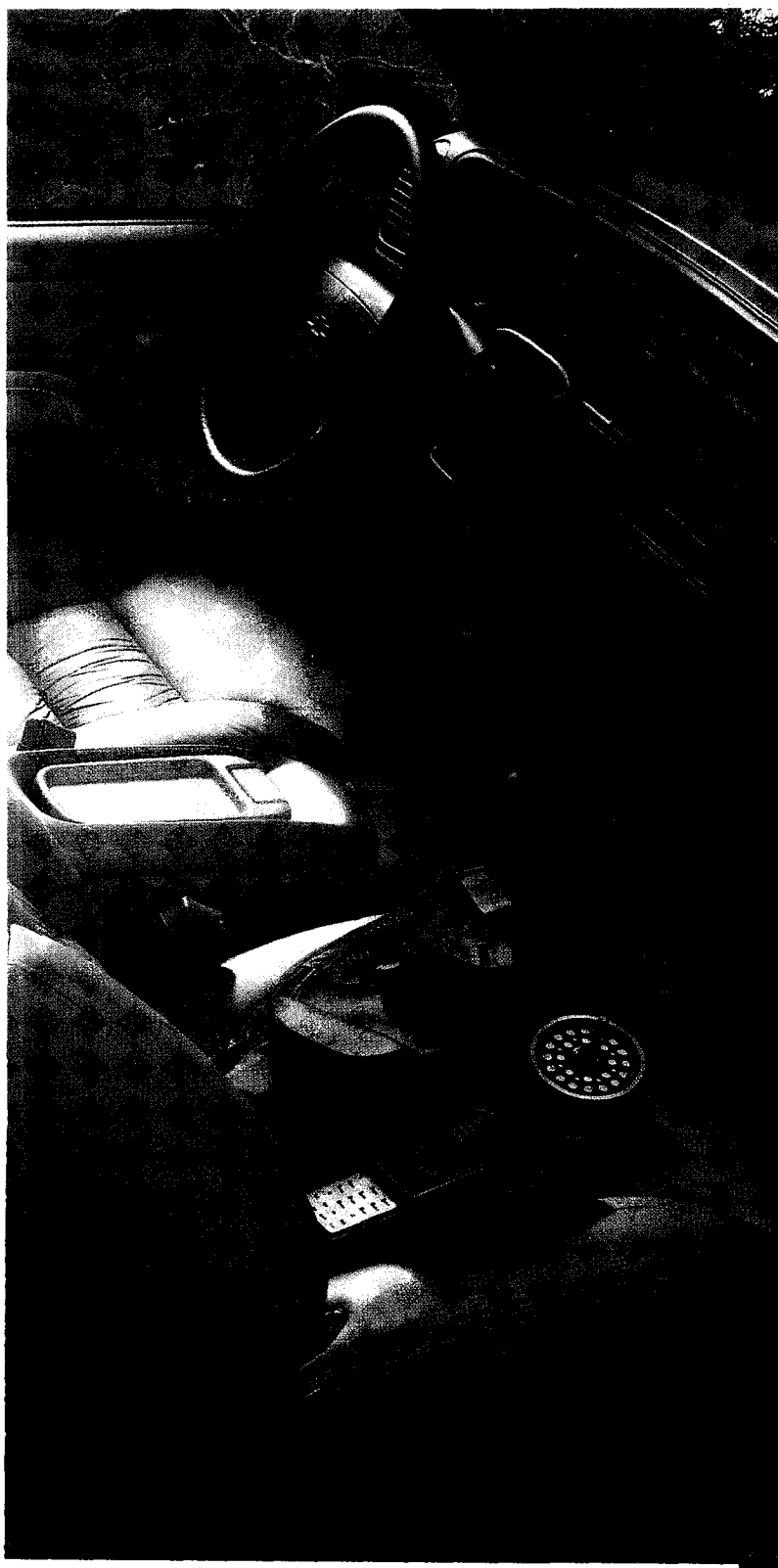

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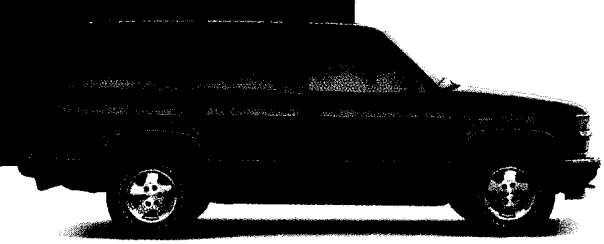

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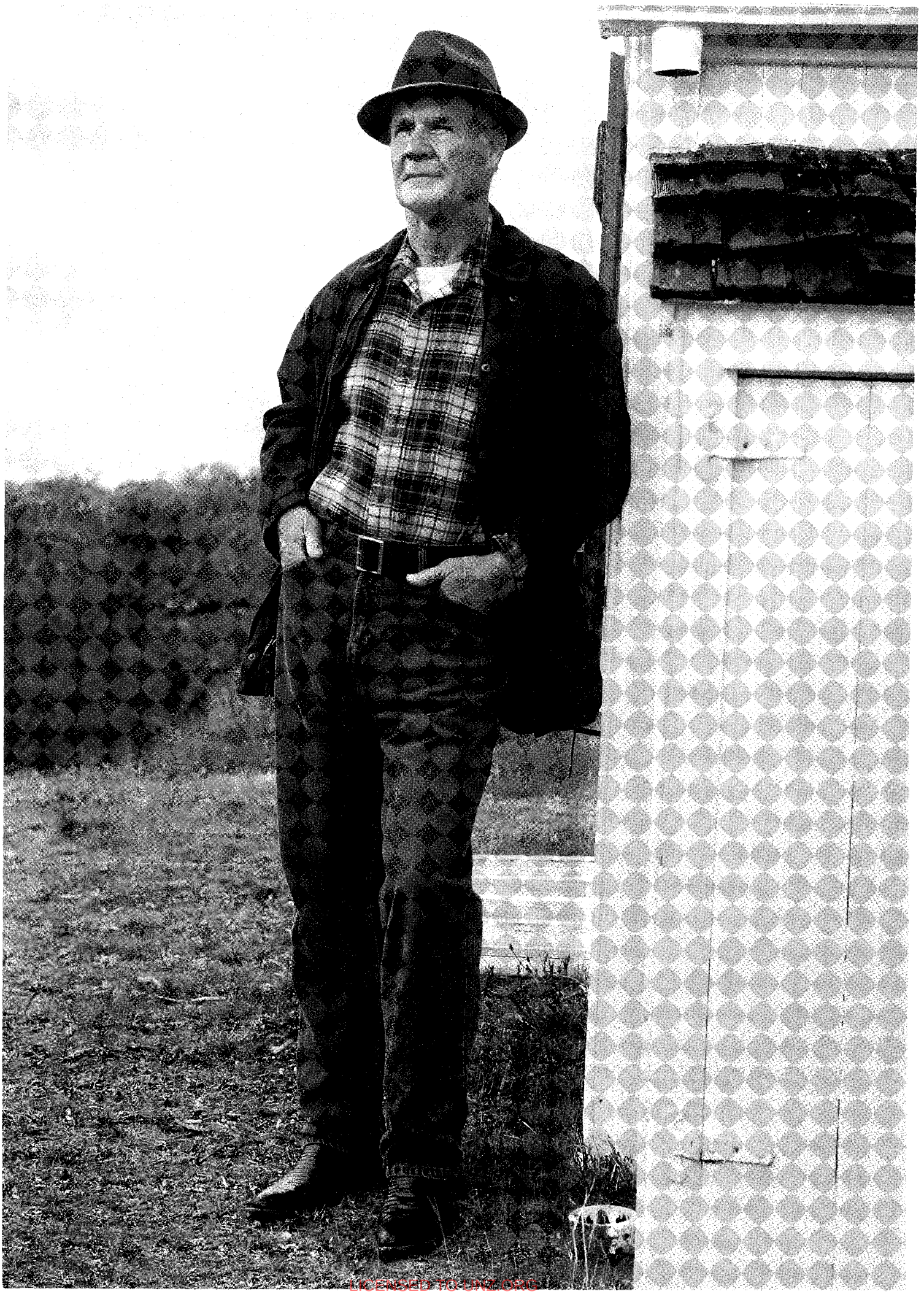

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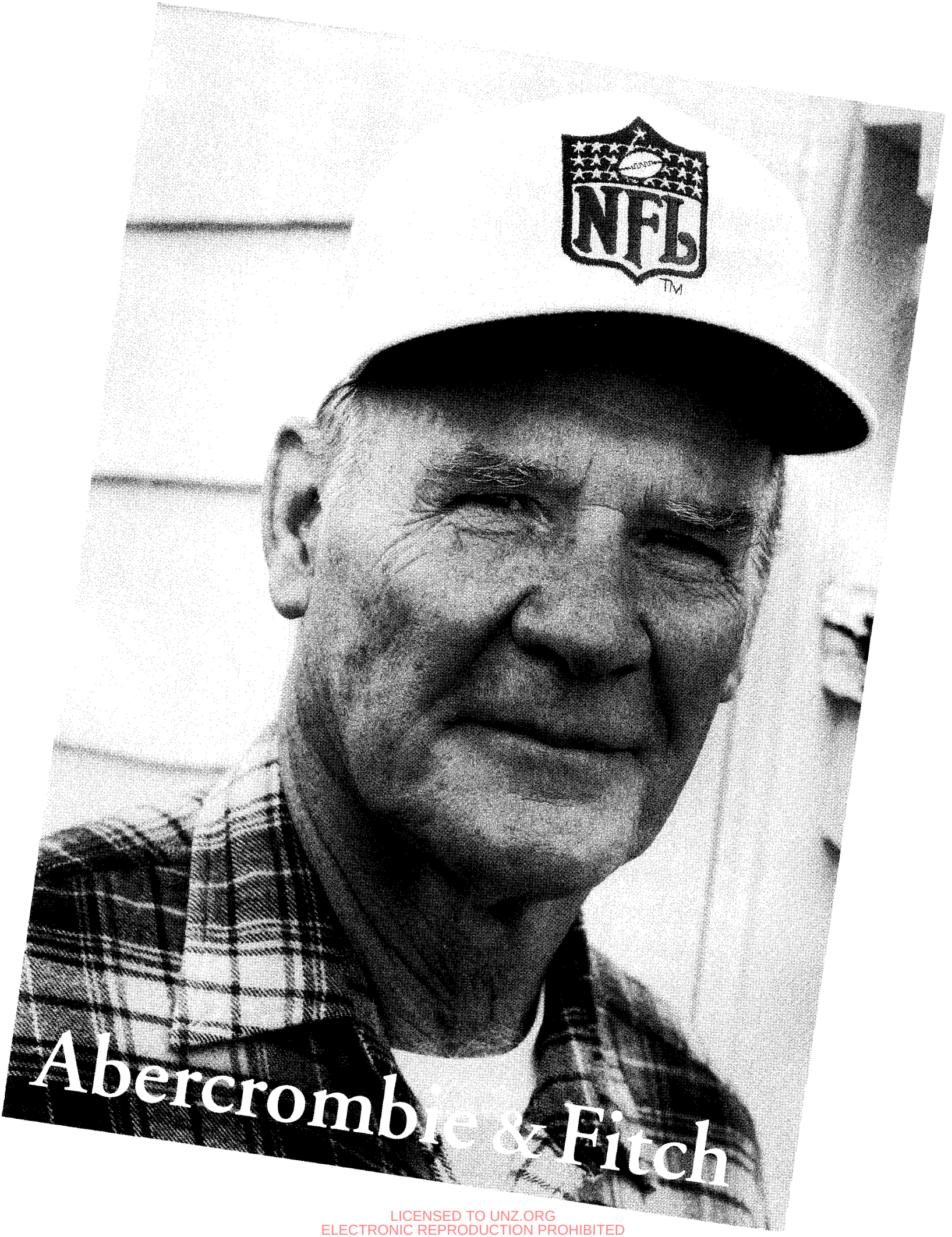

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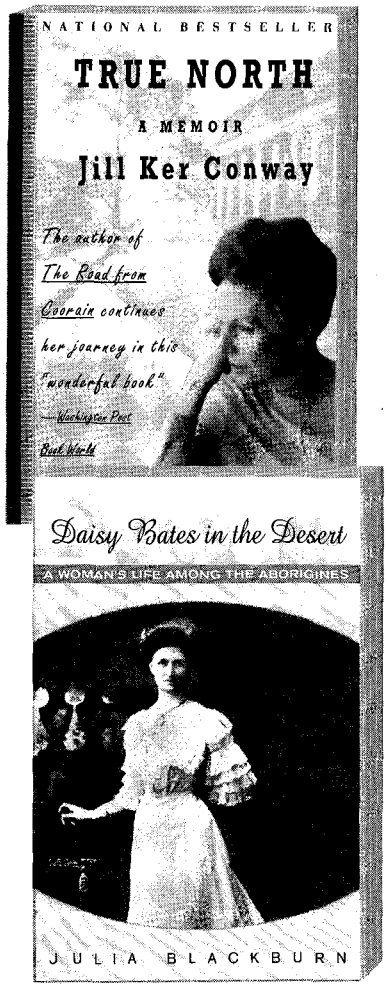

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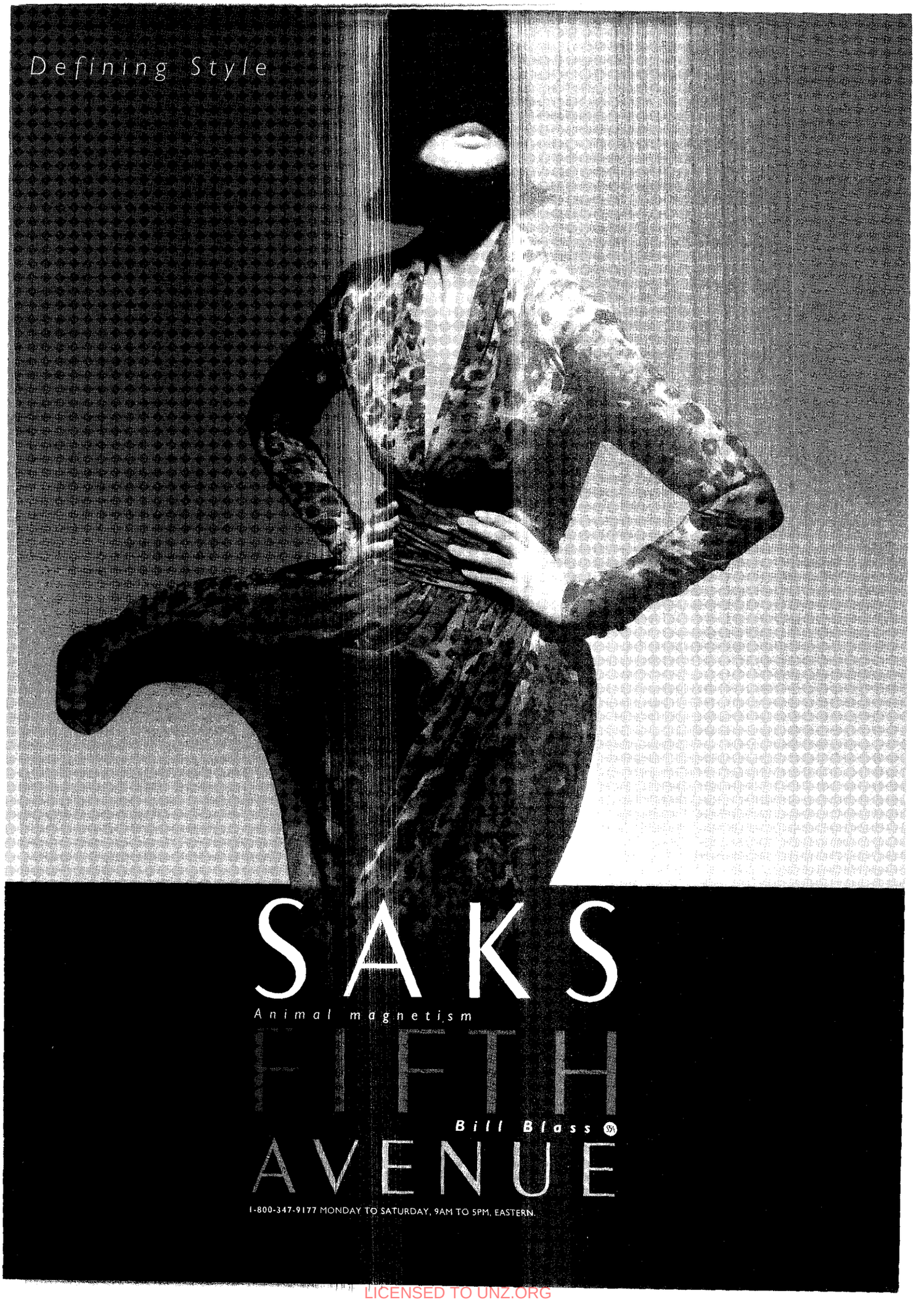

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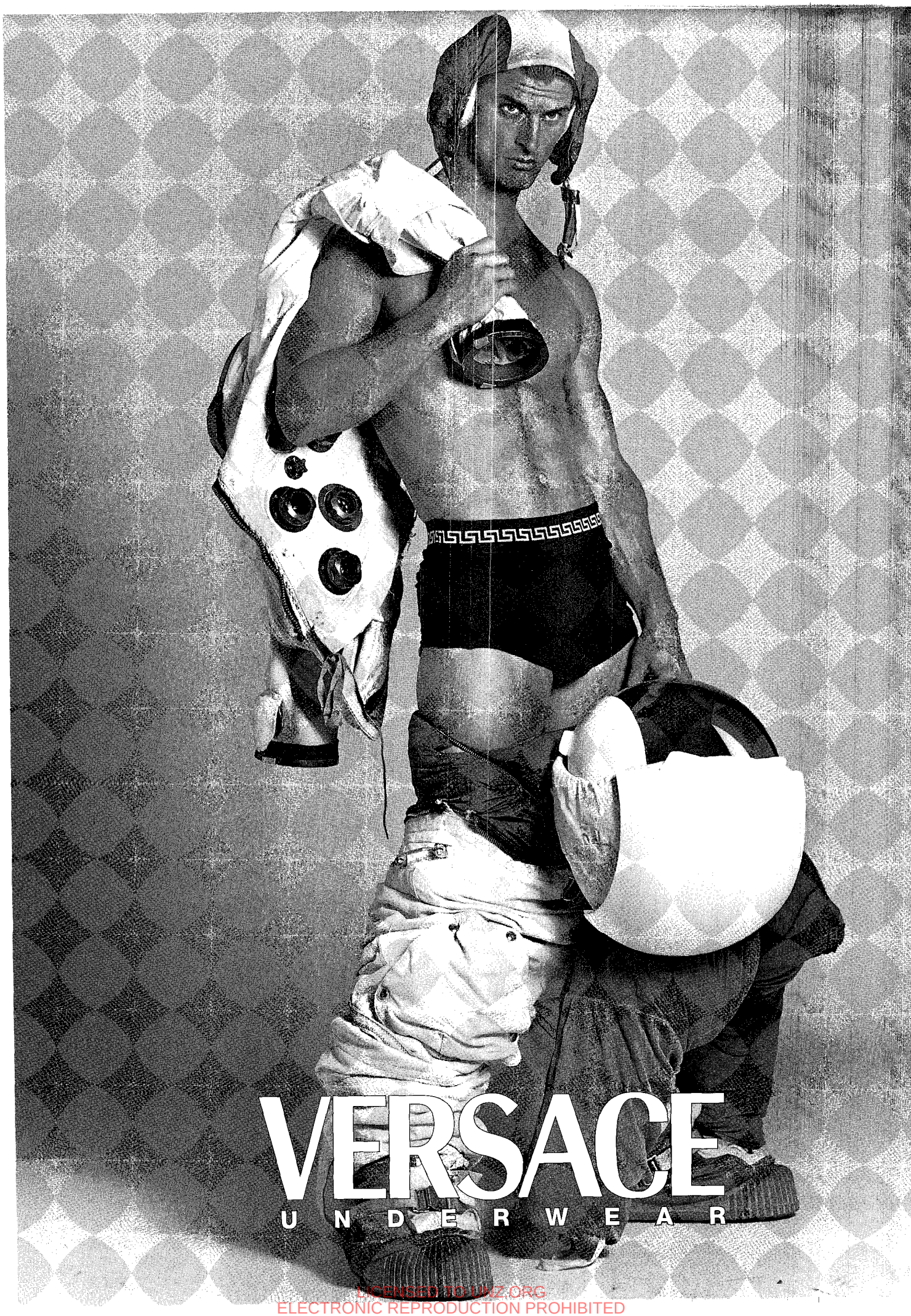

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AMERICAN BEAUTY

The Grateful Dead's burly, beatific alchemist.

As word of the death of Jerry Garcia spread last Wednesday, via news reports and phone calls and E-mail, the scale of the reaction and the depth of the response quickly surpassed what anyone might have expected. It was suddenly obvious that Garcia had become, against all odds, an American icon: by Thursday morning, the avuncular old reprobate had smuggled his way onto the front pages of newspapers around the world. That his battered, ruined body had finally given out was somehow less surprising than the abrupt recognition of how much he had meant to so many. He was eulogized as a rock star and as a guitar god, of course; he was praised as a businessman who marketed his mystique both shrewdly and generously; and, in the obituaries that recounted the intermittent struggles with addiction that preceded his demise, at the age of fifty-three, in a Marin County drug-rehabilitation center, he was inevitably, and with some justice, pronounced a casualty of drug abuse. But Jerry Garcia was a more graceful and complicated figure than those categories can encompass: he transcended show business, and it's impossible, even now, to think of him as a victim or a sad case. The choices he made in life, whatever their ultimate cost to him, command respect. He was a lyrical hipster, an outlaw with a sense of humor, a fount of profound pleasure for tens of millions of people.

He started his extraordinary career as a bad boy in the classroom ("I was a wise guy, I talked too much, I spoke out of turn, and I was a notorious underachiever," he told an interviewer in 1989) and graduated to become a hood on the streets of San Francisco. In the late fifties, he joined the Army to avoid jail (the reverse of what some of his fans would do a decade later), was discharged after a few months, and wound up living in a car and playing low-end folk gigs in clubs and coffeehouses around Palo Alto. It was a fateful place and time: Beat culture was mixing with pop culture, and the Bay Area's perpetual party was on the verge of being hijacked by the novelist-provocateur Ken Kesey and his band of Merry Pranksters, who spiked the punch with a stash of LSD that had been liberated from local research laboratories. Garcia and his

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"Have your people get in touch with my people."

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friends went to see "A Hard Day's Night" and metamorphosed from a jug band into a rock band. In 1965, the newly psychedelicized Garcia opened a dictionary of folklore and alighted on the phrase "grateful dead," and his group, having adopted the name, began playing at a series of Acid Test gatherings: wild, euphoric, Dadaist affairs that celebrated noise, nonsense, and open-ended improvisation. Those acid-fuelled evenings became the inspiration and the model for the next three decades of Grateful Dead concerts, each of which sought to invoke, in some measure, the crazed, beatific spirit of the Acid Tests.

Amid the chaos, Garcia managed to project a casual authority, and his crystalline lead guitar enhanced the alchemist's aura that he gradually acquired. (For a long time, Deadheads called him Captain Trips, a title he disliked.) Onstage, he was a stolid, impassive, faintly Buddha-like presence, but in conversation he turned out to be a street philosopher with a keen wit and a taste for the absurd. Despite, or because of, all the drugs, he was a lucid, articulate raconteur and spokesman. What he was a spokesman *for* was not exactly clear (and, in any case, he disavowed the role). The Grateful Dead seemed to be the ultimate hippie band, but its members, and Garcia in particular, were far more sardonic and tough-minded than the flower children who wafted into their concerts. The Dead were independent, apolitical, and free of self-dramatizing posturing, and their ornery edge was one of the secrets of their longevity.

Garcia was both starry-eyed and impish about the first blush of the psychedelic subculture he helped bring into being, but there was also a touch of cruelty in his outlook. He loved to tell stories about the first Trips Festival, which was held in San Francisco's Longshoremen's Hall in 1966. It took place "right down on Fisherman's Wharf, near where all the tourists are," Garcia once told a radio interviewer. "People came in total drag—the parking lot was full of cars painted Day-Glo colors, and all kinds of crazy things. Nobody had seen any of this stuff before, this was all *brand-new*. One of my vivid recollections is seeing this old friend of mine, who was stoned out of his head on God knows how many tabs of acid, and he was running down the street stopping tourists and sticking tabs of acid into their mouths, making them take acid, forcing them to take it." He laughed his smoker's half-choked laugh at the memory. "It was crazy, outrageous. There were women running around naked, and Hell's Angels, and every kind of weird thing. Nobody had ever seen this stuff before. The straight people had not seen it. It was like taking Martians and dropping them right into 1957."

It *is* funny, but the slightly chilly indifference to the reality that some people did not (and do not) survive the Acid Test was a characteristic that persisted throughout the history of the Grateful Dead. Yet it was an honest indifference: the imagery of death's-heads and skeletons and matter-of-fact mortality ("If the thunder don't get you then the lightning will," as Garcia's song "The Wheel" puts it) was right on the surface, and the band carried on with a minimum of angst through the passing of three earlier members. Garcia was unwilling to condemn even heroin. "It's tough for me to adopt a totally anti-drug stance," he said in 1989. "For me, it was like taking a vacation while I was still working, in a way. I was on for eight years. It was long enough to find out everything I needed to know about it, and that was it." Evidently, Garcia was unable to maintain that kind of detachment until the end.

In spite of these dark tints, Jerry Garcia's legacy is overwhelmingly positive. Grateful Dead tours became an American institution, a travelling Chautauqua of eclectic musicianship and communal, cross-generational joy. For every show that fizzled out into noodling mediocrity, there were two or three that sheltered the audience in a beneficent rainbow of great rock and roll. In the future, those who will come to know the Grateful Dead only through their recordings may wonder what all the fuss was about; the Dead's most original creation, after all, was the gestalt of their concerts—the belongingness that enveloped their audience and made it as central to their music as their very voices and instruments. If something so evanescent could be put in a museum, an evening with the Grateful Dead would warrant a place of honor in the Smithsonian. But what was best about the band cannot, by its nature, be preserved, and that gives Garcia's passing a special sting. With his death, only the gratefulness remains.

—Hal Espen

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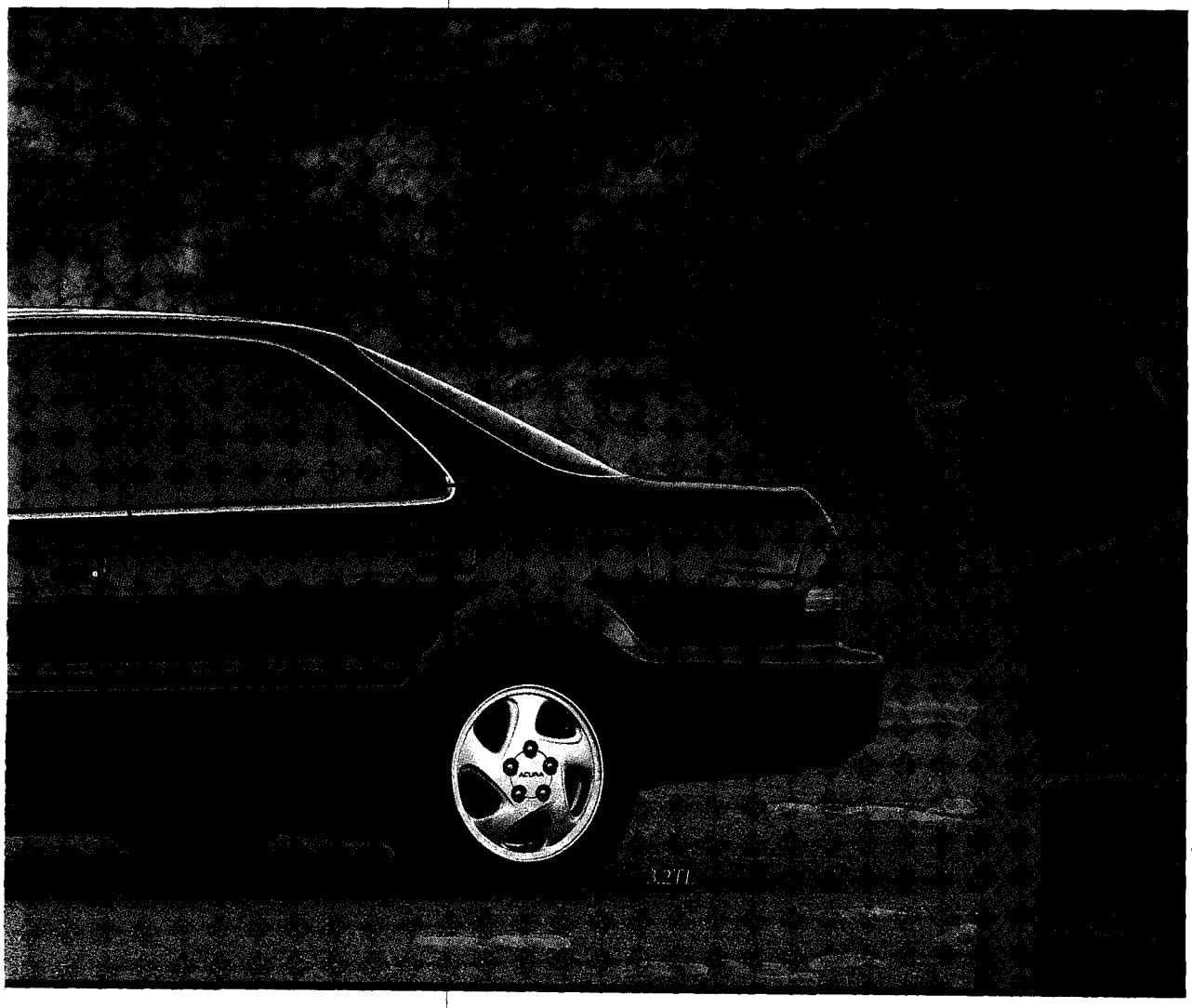

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PRIVILEGES FOR PRISONERS

If educating prisoners leads to employment, as a number of people interviewed by James S. Kunen ("Teaching Prisoners a Lesson," July 10th) seem to believe, maybe they should be reminded that education was available at an earlier date to people who became prisoners, and that if those people had stayed in school instead of embracing the street, the debate over whether their education benefits should be curtailed would be a theoretical issue.

STEVEN G. MAURER
Philadelphia, Pa.

Though many inmates receive the bulk of their education while in prison, I was in the more unusual position of arriving there already educated. When I was seventeen, I broke into the house of a boy I had a grudge against. My intentions were violent, but because no one was hurt I did not have to serve time and received five years' probation instead. After about three years, I left the state (thus breaking both my probation and the law), and while living as a fugitive I went to college and started a business: in short, I grew up. For the first time in my life, I had some security and a future to prepare for. With this future in mind, I flew back home and turned myself in. Ten years after my original crime, I served four months in jail.

What this whole experience made clear to me is that there is an obvious but largely unnoticed crack in our justice system: everyone from senators and psychologists to prison guards thinks he knows how to handle the problem of crime and criminals, but no one creating prison policy has been to prison, or has lived the way most pre-inmates live. To take a person who is violent despite the spectre of prison and abuse him further is both barbaric and counterproductive. The only solution to crime is to provide these people with another, nonviolent source of power. As Mr. Kunen nicely illustrated, one such source of personal power is education.

STEPHEN TUCKER MCLAUGHLIN
Eugene, Ore.

The official in New York's Department of Correctional Services who said that the public hates prison education programs because "we resent people coming alive" misjudges us. What I resent is the fact that my son will carry educational-loan debts for ten years after working his way through school, while another man might complete even higher studies *free* from all debt by virtue of having committed armed robbery or worse. So, although I agree that it is right and pragmatic to educate prisoners, expecting me to like the idea is unreasonable and unfair.

DIANE MCMULLIN
Edgewood, Pa.

OBJECT LESSONS

While historical analogies should never be made frivolously or maliciously, Sidney Blumenthal's revelations about Helen Chenoweth ("The Political Scene: Her Own Private Idaho," July 10th) reminded me immediately of another elected fascist who fabricated conspiracy propaganda, favored one particular race over others, vilified the government and its institutions, and exploited envy and hate. He was ridiculed and dismissed years before he became Germany's Chancellor. Helen Chenoweth is a long way from Adolf Hitler, but Adolf Hitler was a long way from Adolf Hitler at one time, too. If we learn anything from this cataclysmic century—and I doubt whether we will—it is that verbal violence unchallenged leads ineluctably to phys-

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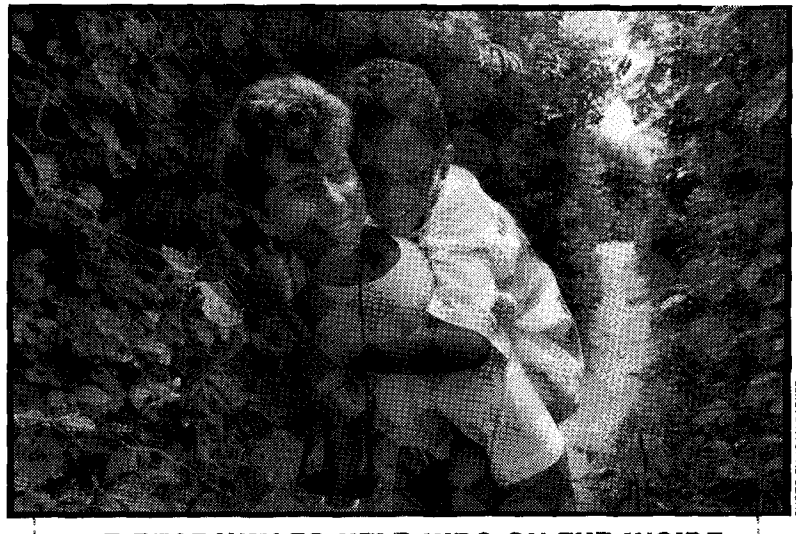

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ical violence, and to the proliferation of thousands of Helen Chenoweths.

HALTON ADLER MANN
New York City

When I came from Idaho to attend school near Philadelphia last fall, West met East like two trucks on a one-lane mountain road. Chenoweth is right when she says that "our way of life out here is something that in the East they can't fathom." However, the opposite is also true. It wasn't until I ventured east of Yellowstone that I learned that the unadulterated Idaho land I love exists precisely because the federal government owns the majority of its acres; that good things are sponsored by the N.E.A.; that loose gun laws and decreased welfare can be destructive for the inner-city poor. It is clear to me now that laws that are unnecessary (and even harmful) for some parts of this country may be necessary for others. But I balk at giving the states more autonomy. The legislative wisdom of people who are seeing only one facet of a very big diamond is doubtful.

ANDREA BAKER
Haverford, Pa.

BIKER IN THE 'BURBS

Your Portfolio "An American Attitude" (photographs by Sandro Miller and text by Alec Wilkinson, July 10th) warmed the heart of this old reactionary. I must admit that I sometimes miss the stodgy *New Yorker* of yore, but, by perpetuating the stereotype of motorcyclists as hirsute, whiskey-drinking nihilists whose taste in adornment is limited to black leather, tattoos, and assorted jewelry, you have demonstrated that *The New Yorker* is still a very traditional magazine. If you really want to *épater le bourgeois*, forget the full-page photograph of the dude with the skull ring flipping the bird and run a piece on a biker like me—a Yale-educated suburbanite who couldn't tell the difference between a tab of acid and a Tylenol. Now, *that* would be radical.

DAVID HAYDEN
Wilton, Conn.

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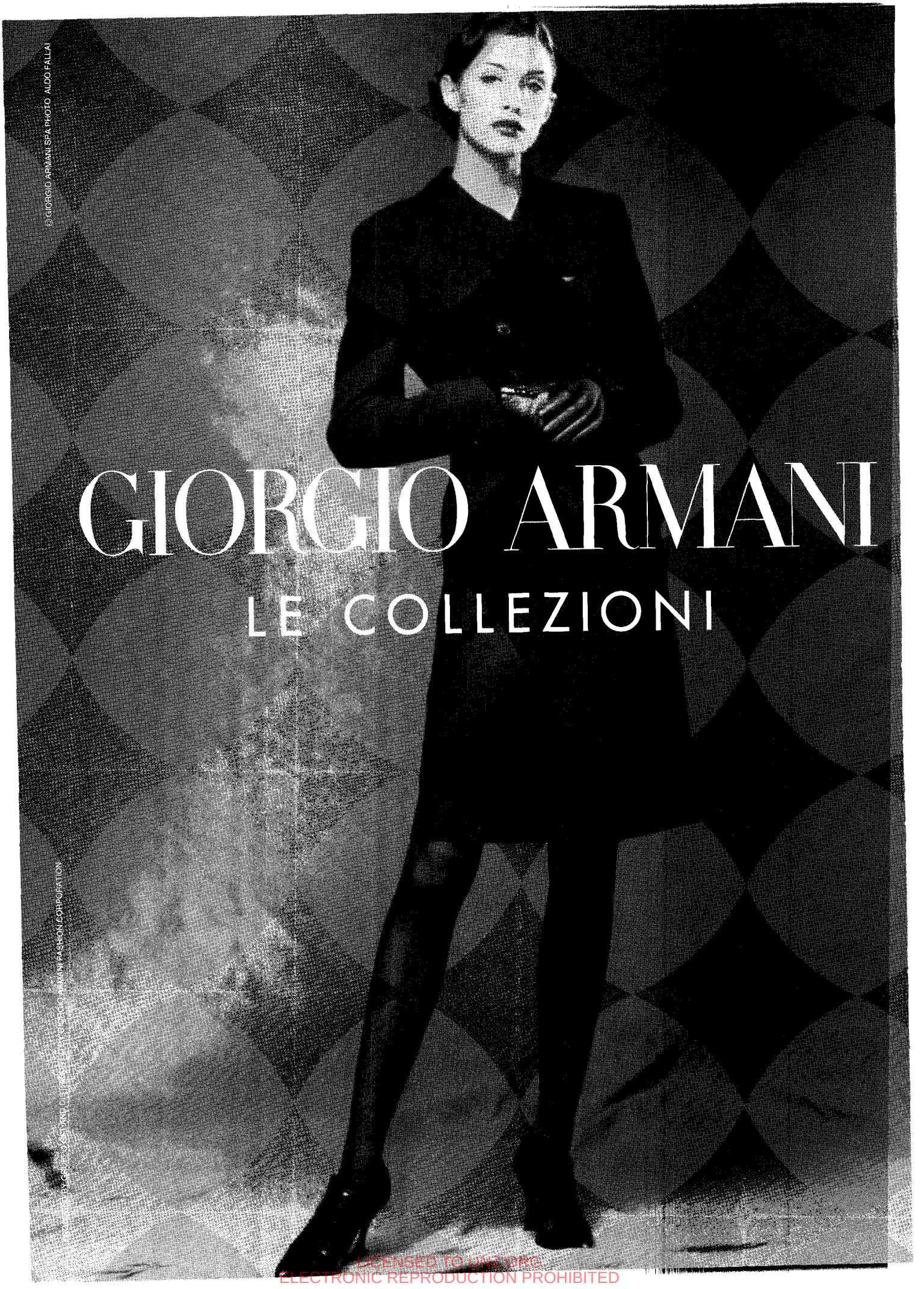

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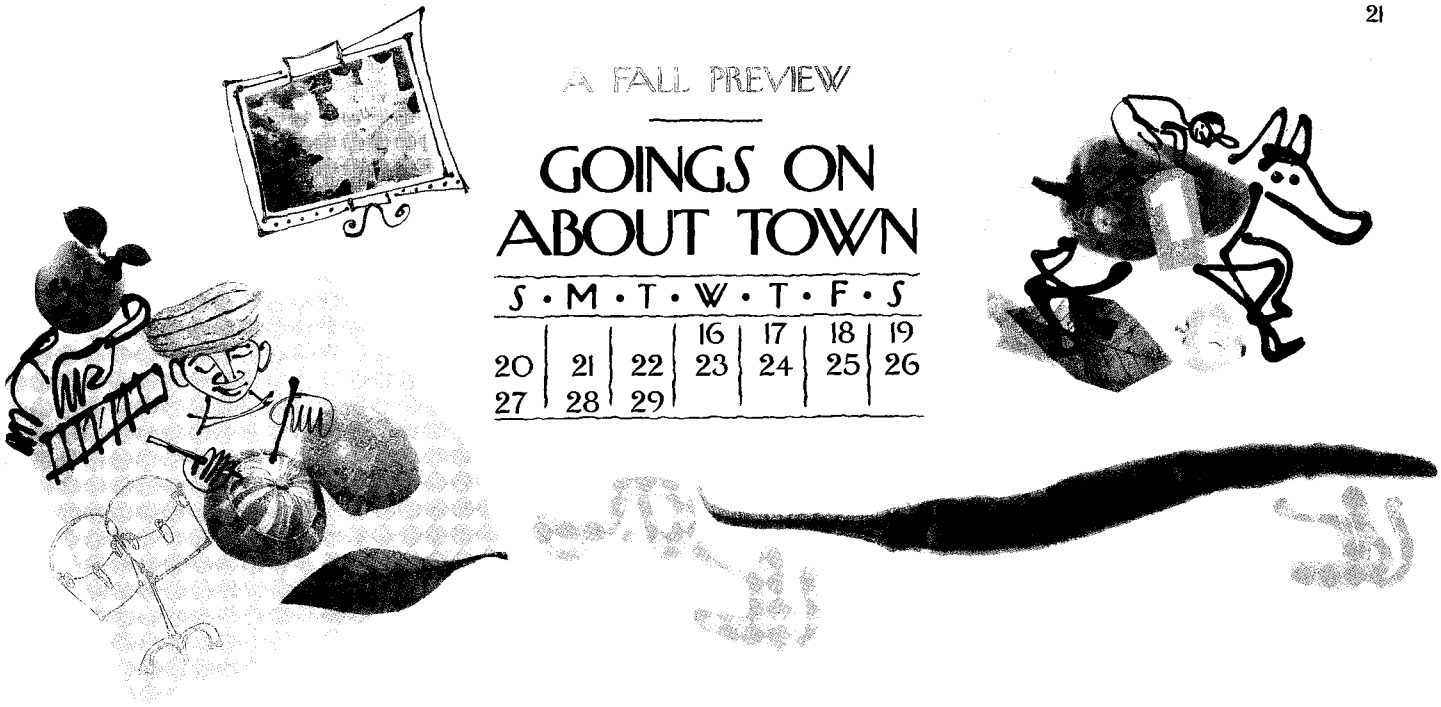

THE THEATRE

In the Wings

THE renovation of 42nd Street's vintage entertainment palaces may be getting the ballyhoo, but the best theatre news for the fall is the opening of the Laura Pels Theatre at the Roundabout/Criterion Center. Some of the playwrights forced off Broadway in recent years for economic reasons will now have a comfy (three hundred and ninety-nine seats) midtown home. Harold Pinter's new drama, "Moonlight" (with Jason Robards and Blythe Danner, under the direction of Karel Reisz), inaugurates the Pels on October 17; the next offering there will be Brian Friel's "Molly Sweeney," again with Robards. (The Roundabout's main stage kicks off with a revival of Stephen Sondheim's "Company.")

Otherwise, divas rule the rialto. *The* diva, Maria Callas (played by Zoe Caldwell), spars with a group of Juilliard voice students in Terrence McNally's "Master Class"; Callas listens to a student's selection from Verdi's "Macbeth" and comments, "The entrance aria. You're humble, like me, that's good. They usually all want to start with the Sleepwalking Scene." Julie Andrews comes back to Broadway in the musical version of her 1982 movie hit, "Victor/Victoria." Whatever the critical fate of this eight-and-a-half-million-dollar vision of nineteen-thirties Paris (and the news from the road is that Rachel York, as a disgruntled hussy, steals the show), the diva's name on the marquee could be enough to make this the fall's biggest opener. Meanwhile, Andrews' old show-biz pal Carol Burnett is also making a return, in Ken Ludwig's "Moon Over Buffalo"—a backstage comedy about a nineteen-fifties road company performing "Private Lives" and "Cyrano de Bergerac." The queen of the road, Carol Channing (she's done "Hello, Dolly!" in so many places over the past thirty years that it has been said that the only tour left for her is "Dolly: Door to Door"), is coming back, too. Is her "Dolly" routine getting a little dated by now? Sure—like Mozart.

Things look just as promising uptown and downtown. Lincoln Center is staging "Racing Demon," the high point of the trilogy in which David Hare squared off against British institutions (with Richard Eyre, the outgoing director of the Royal National Theatre, making his American directing début), and the Promenade is presenting Steve Martin's new "Picasso at the Lapin Agile," with its Stoppardian setup of a young Einstein and Picasso trading intellectual riffs in early-twentieth-century Paris. Downtown, the Public is doing an evening of Martin's satirical one-acts, "Wasp and the Magic Tricks." Also on the lineup there: a Signature Theatre season devoted to the playwright Adrienne Kennedy; a tap-and-rap hybrid by Reg E. Gaines, George C. Wolfe, and Savion Glover, featuring Glover; Camryn Manheim's one-woman show, "Wake Up, I'm Fat!"; and the American première of "The Skriker," Caryl Churchill's psychological fantasia about an underworld spirit's attempt to capture the soul of an unborn child.

LAURIE ROSENWALD

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Cute Boys in Their Underpants—A return engagement of Robert Coles's comedy, set during rehearsals for a junky gay play of the same title. Opens Aug. 18 at 8 and runs through Sept. 17. (Sanford Meisner, 164 Eleventh Ave., at 22nd St. 206-1764.)

The Food Chain—In this comedy by Nicky Silver, a call to a crisis hot line initiates a series of chases—wife after husband, mother after son, son after the object of his affection. In previews through Aug. 23. Opens Aug. 24 at 7. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Lillian—The British performance artist David Cale presents an evening-length work in progress about a young woman's love affair, his first piece narrated from a single point of view. Aug. 22 and Aug. 29 at 8. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at Ninth St. 477-5288.)

A Midsummer Night's Dream—Gorilla Repertory Theatre's annual free outdoor production in Washington Square Park, directed by Christopher Carter Sanderson, runs through Sept. 24. (For more information, call 330-8086.)

Troilus and Cressida—The summer's second and final New York Shakespeare Festival production, directed by Mark Wing-Davey, stars Neal Huff and Elizabeth Marvel in the title roles, and features Stephen Spinella as Pandarus. Preview on Aug. 16. Opens Aug. 17 at 8:15 and runs through Sept. 3. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

OPENED RECENTLY

After-Play—Anne Meara's comedy, about two couples who get together for an after-theatre dinner, stars Ms. Meara, Barbara Barrie, Larry Keith, and Merwin Goldsmith. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/13/95.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

Arcadia—Despite some casting glitches, the American première of Tom Stoppard's 1993 play, which shuttles between 1809 and the present, is an elegant production of an enormous theatrical feat. In a kind of intellectual mystery story, Stoppard provides the audience with the exhilarating illusion of omniscience, allowing us to solve a riddle of history from clues and connections that the characters, caught in time, do not see. Directed by Trevor Nunn. (4/17/95) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes Aug. 27.)

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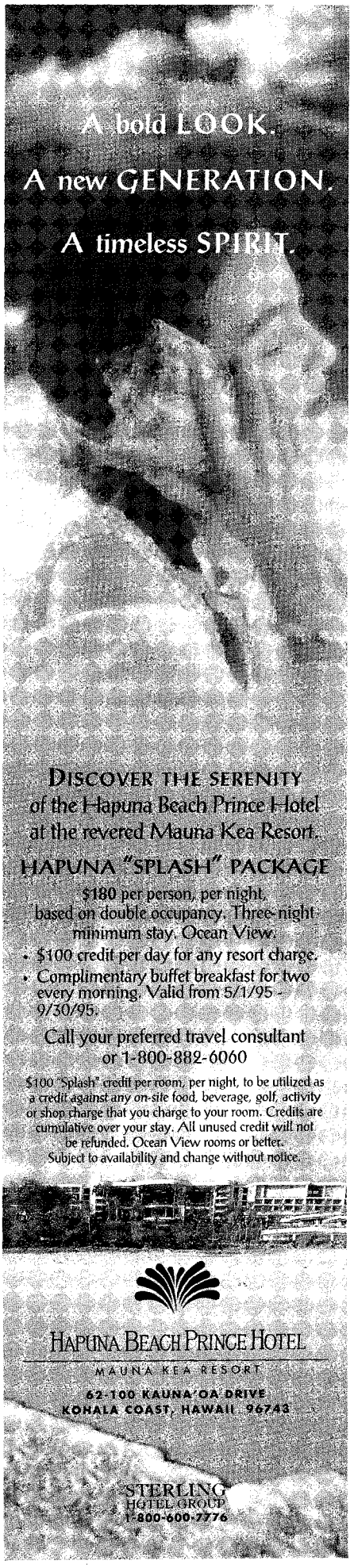

The Caucasian Chalk Circle—The Ma-Yi Theatre Ensemble's production of Brecht's drama runs through Aug. 26. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 683-9772.)

Death Defying Acts—Three subpar one-act comedies, by David Mamet, Elaine May, and Woody Allen, that have the words "Written to Order" stamped all over them. (3/20/95) (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

Ecstasy—Mike Leigh's play is set in a dismal North London flat in the winter of 1979. The late-seventies costumes and set are depressingly perfect, and the actors bring the six working-class characters to life with great specificity and vitality. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Entremeses—Free outdoor performances of three of Cervantes' comic interludes, presented by the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre. They continue, with stops at various locations, through Aug. 27. In Spanish, with English synopses. (For more information, call 354-1293.)

For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide / When the Rainbow Is Enuf—Ntozake Shange directed this twentieth-anniversary production of her consciousness-raising play about black womanhood in America. It's still so fresh that after two decades it seems like it was written yesterday. (Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. 346-8510.)

Having Our Say—Sadie and Bessie Delany, two sisters who have passed the hundred-year mark, presented their vivid life stories in a 1993 best-seller; the book has been adapted beautifully from the page to the stage by Emily Mann, who also directed. Gloria Foster and Mary Alice are brilliant as the sisters, who were taught by their family to "reach high" despite the dogging of Jim Crow. (4/24/95) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Heiress—A revival of Ruth and Augustus Goetz's 1947 adaptation of Henry James's "Washington Square," directed by Gerald Gutierrez. Cherry Jones, who plays the title character, is exquisitely—almost unbearably—vulnerable. And the wonderful Frances Sternhagen is touching and funny as a widowed aunt. (3/20/95) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—In this revival of Frank Loesser's 1961 musical, Matthew Broderick has polish and timing, but it's Lillias White's gospel solo in "Brotherhood of Man" that lifts the audience into a zone of joy. As a paradigm for the Broadway musical's con game—winning the public's heart while picking its pocket—her display of guile made glorious is as good as it gets. (4/24/95) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Indiscretions—This production of Jean Cocteau's "Les Parents Terribles," a dark comedy about the perversities of desire in family life, is marred by heavy-handedness and an unsatisfying central performance: Kathleen Turner, playing a hysterically possessive mother, is an unfocussed sprawl with a distractingly unplaceable accent. Roger Rees, Cynthia Nixon, and Jude Law also star, under the direction of Sean Mathias. (5/15/95) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

John & Jen—Andrew Lippa and Tom Greenwald's musical, which spans a forty-year period starting in 1951, explores problems of love and family through the relationships of a sister and a brother and, later on, the sister and her son. The book is often hackneyed and the music repetitive, though the lyrics possess an honest charm. Well staged by Gabriel Barre. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

London Suite—Neil Simon knows how to cater to his audience, but he's serving leftovers: these four one-acts are painfully dated in both their substance and their execution. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

One Woman Shoe—The brother-and-sister writing team of David and Amy Sedaris bill themselves as the Talent Family, and it's a rare case of truth in advertising. In this encore production of their hilarious show, three clueless women are told by their social-services caseworker (played to Franklin Pangbornian perfection by David Rakoff) that they must put on one-woman shows in order to keep their benefit checks coming. The five cast members are all funny in a number of roles, but Ms. Sedaris, with her chipmunk's overbite and her remarkably plastic face, is extraordinary. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710.)

The Only Thing Worse You Could Have Told Me . . .—Greg Louganis has taken over for Dan Butler in Mr. Butler's one-man show, a procession of characters from the real world of contemporary gay culture, which is by turns funny, infuriating, sad, and uplifting—a charmer. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 307-4100.)

Boyd Gaines, in "Company," opening at the Roundabout on September 28.

GEOFFREY PARKER

Party—In David Dillon's comedy, seven gay men get together to play a strip version of truth or dare, with terrifically funny (if occasionally didactic) results. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Pets!—Helen Butleroff, together with seventeen writers, composers, and lyricists and five engaging actors, has created the perfect theatrical beach novel, about people and their pets. The evening has its slow bits, but its charm and silliness consistently win out. How can you lose with a show in which a lovelorn iguana sings a tango? (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 307-4100.)

The Play's the Thing—This revival of Ferenc Molnár's clever confection lacks a spirit of farcical possibility—it's all leaden inevitability. Peter Frechette, as the egocentric playwright who manipulates the action onstage, excels at neurotic thoughtfulness, but he makes for a limp catalyst. The standouts are the sparky J. Smith-Cameron, playing a prima-donna actress, and Keith Reddin, as antic as ever as a sweaty factotum. Gloria Muzio directed; Stephan Olson designed the beautiful set—the Italian villa of your dreams—and, hands down, wins the award for Best Curtain of 1995. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400. Closes Aug. 18.)

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Rob Becker's Defending the Caveman—A hundred-minute standup routine. Some of Becker's examples of discontent between the sexes are very funny (a lot of vigorous nodding goes on in the theatre—never by men and women at the same time), but a fair number of them are shopworn. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

Smokey Joe's Café—The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—A feast of early rock and roll, performed by a cast with Grade A lungs and legs. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

Sunset Boulevard—Betty Buckley takes on the role of Norma Desmond. (12/5/94) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4007.)

Swingtime Canteen—A re-creation of a 1944 U.S.O. concert, performed in a night club. Extraneous bits of plot threaten to derail the show, but the lovely songs, done with verve and charm, carry the day. Charles Busch donned drag again recently to join the cast. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Closes Sept. 5.)

Sylvia—In A. R. Gurney's new comedy, Sarah Jessica Parker, as a dog named Sylvia, brings meaning to the life of a middle-aged currency trader (John Cunningham) while driving a canine-shaped wedge between him and his wife (Mariette Hartley). Parker has some funny moments, but this upper-middle-class fairy tale settles too soon into a monotonous sweetness; it lacks bite. John Tillinger directed. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Time and the Wind—A revue tracing the course of three New York romances. Music by Galt MacDermot ("Hair"). Direction by Louis Johnson. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-4324.)

Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind—The Neo-Futurists, a troupe from Chicago, perform thirty original two-minute plays in one hour. They change the program each night, and when there's a full house they order a pizza. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 330-8087.)

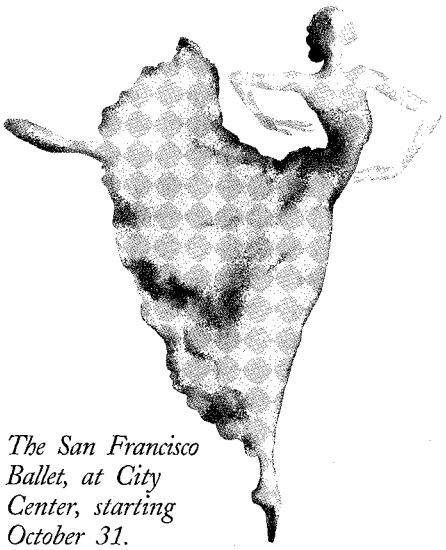
Travels with My Aunt—Giles Havergal, directing his own witty adaptation of Graham Greene's novel, has captured the book's amusingly puzzled tone with his playful, inventive (though overlong) staging. Four wildly different actors all play Henry Pulling, the staid retired banker whose eccentric Aunt Augusta drags him into her international adventures; one doubles as Aunt Augusta, and the other three skillfully handle some twenty additional parts. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 420-8000.)

2 Boys in a Bed on a Cold Winter's Night—James Edwin Parker's comic tale is about how not to behave during a one-night stand, but it's also a sharp-eyed exploration of emotional intimacy. Robert Gomes and Michael Curry make the grown-up boys sympathetic without being mushy. Directed by Thomas Caruso. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 279-4200.)

The Two Gentlemen of Verona—The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival production, set in upstate New York during the go-go days of the late nineteen-eighties, continues through Aug. 20. (Boscobel Restoration, Garrison, N.Y. For ticket information and directions, call 1-914 265-9575.)

LONG RUNS

Beauty and the Beast: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **Blue Man Group / Tubes:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **Cats:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **Crazy for You:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **The Fantasticks:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **Grandma Sylvia's Funeral:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **Grease!:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **Love! Valour! Compassion!:** Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200. . . . **Les Misérables:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **Miss Saigon:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **Perfect Crime:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **The Phantom of the Opera:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **Show Boat:** Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. . . . **Stomp:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **Three Tall Women:** Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200. Closes Aug. 26. . . . **Tony n' Tina's Wedding:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200.



The San Francisco Ballet, at City Center, starting October 31.

DANCE

IN TOWN

Feld Ballets / NY—Aug. 16-17 at 8 and Aug. 19 at 2: "The Grand Canon," "Ogive," "Chi," and "Ludwig Gambits." . . . ¶ Aug. 18-19 at 8: "Harbinger," "Clave," "With Dew Upon Their Feet," and "The Jig Is Up." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors—The monthlong series of free outdoor performances continues through August 28. Aug. 16 at 5:30: Choreographers Kumiko Kimoto, Annie-B Parson, and Steve Gross collaborate with composers Marti Epstein, Richard Einhorn, and Nana Simopoulos, respectively, in works presented at the recent American Dance Festival, in Durham, North Carolina. (North Plaza.) . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 8:15: The Alvin Ailey Repertory Company performs the Ailey works "Streams" and "Escapades," as well as Danial Shapiro and Joanie Smith's "Three Dances with Army Blankets." (Damrosch Park.) . . . ¶ Aug. 17 at 5:30: Chen and Dancers, in "Red Spot." (Fountain Plaza.) . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 6: The seven dancers, singers, and guitarists of the Madrid-based Noche Flamenca. (Fountain Plaza.) . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 3: Five dancers from Washington, D.C., including the choreographer and modern dancer Maida Withers and the tap duo Mya Henderson and Joe Webb. (Fountain Plaza.) . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 8:15: African dancing and drumming with D.C. Mama Africa. (Damrosch Park.) . . . ¶ Aug. 22-23 at 8:15: The Washington Ballet. (Damrosch Park.) . . . ¶ Aug. 25 at 6: Male dancers from Expressions of Man, the Indian ensemble, perform solos in five different classical styles. (Fountain Plaza.)

Pilar Rioja—In her twenty-third New York season, the dancer performs solo in a range of traditional Spanish styles; expect canes, fans, footwork, skirt work, snapping fingers, and castanets. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. Aug. 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, and 29 at 8; Aug. 20 and Aug. 26 at 3; and Aug. 27 at 7. Through Sept. 17.)

OUT OF TOWN

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—Aug. 16-17 at 8, Aug. 18 at 8:30, and Aug. 19 at 2 and 8:30: Ballet British Columbia. . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 8, Aug. 19 at 5, and Aug. 20 at 7: Ralph Lemon Company. . . . ¶ Aug. 22-24 at 8, Aug. 25 at 8:30, and Aug. 26 at 2 and 8:30: American Indian Dance Theatre. . . . ¶ Aug. 25 at 8, Aug. 26 at 5, and Aug. 27 at 7: Joe Chvala and the Flying Foot Forum. (Becket, Mass. For information about tickets, call 1-413 243-0745.)

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NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Huey Lewis—It's hip to be square, Lewis and the News asserted back in the eighties. Now it isn't (though Hootie & the Blowfish might dispute that point). And they aren't. For what it's worth, this clean-cut, regular-dude singer and his sturdy band are still working; "Four Chords & Several Years Ago," a collection of cover songs that pay homage to the fifties and the pre-psychedelic sixties, is their most recent contribution. (Westbury Music Fair. 1-516 334-0800. Aug. 16 at 8.)

Holly Cole / Ron Sexsmith—Two new artists who offer a glimpse into the future of folk. "Temptation," Cole's collection of Tom Waits songs (on Capitol Records' jazzy Metro Blue imprint), is fuelled by upright bass, brushstroked drums, and bluesy piano. She's a big talent, a growling, alto version of Rickie Lee Jones. Sexsmith's début (which appears, inexplicably, on Interscope records—best known for its dirty-mouthed gangsta acts) is another grab bag of acoustic guitar, drum machine, and forlorn, homesick blues. A great lineup. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Aug. 16 at 8.)

Tom Petty—The slim Floridian has moved gracefully from power-pop punkiness to a relaxed, folk-inflected midlife manner. He returns to play new material from his recent "Wildflowers," a Traveling Wilburys tune or two, and his huge sack of hits. (Jones Beach Theatre. 1-516 221-1000. Aug. 17 at 8.)

Diana Ross—Is she a goddess? The hair, the costume changes, the imperiousness (stagehands are forbidden to make eye contact) might lead you to think so. But the voice, which was never as great as the material that propelled it, has faded. For devotees only. (Jones Beach Theatre. Aug. 18 at 8.)

La India—The new salsa star. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Prospect Park, Brooklyn. For information, call 1-718 855-7882. Aug. 18 at 7.)

Old School Throwdown III—A homeboy homecoming and an onstage battle royale. In the early days, hip-hop artists engaged in clever verbal duels over such key issues as who was the best lover, who was the best d.j., and which borough ruled New York. (Sounds like a City Council meeting.) This show pits KRS-One, who's among rap's most respected elder statesmen, against MC Shan, and UTFO against Roxanne Shanté. The idea of putting Bronx loyalist KRS's measured cadences side-by-side with Queens defender Shan's gritty riffing sounds like grand fun, but it's the UTFO/Shanté showdown that should set off the fireworks. In the early eighties, UTFO released the classic "Roxanne Roxanne," which painted an unflattering portrait of a stuck-up gold-digger. Shanté's brilliant retort, "Roxanne's Revenge," was raw, lowdown, and absolutely hilarious; this rare stage appearance by the scowling Queen of Dis is just about guaranteed to bring down the house. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Aug. 18 at 8.)

Sponge / Letters to Cleo / Ned's Atomic Dustbin—A triple bill of MTV-flavored goodies. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 247-0200. Aug. 18 at 7:30.)

Paquito D'Rivera and the Brooklyn Philharmonic—The alto sax and clarinet man joins a home-town orchestra to play Jobim, Astor Piazzolla, and a little Latin-flavored jazz. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Prospect Park, Brooklyn. Aug. 19 at 7.)

Willie Nelson—Since reaching a settlement with the I.R.S. that cost him millions, ole Texas Willie has been in artistic and commercial overdrive. In 1993, he released "Across the Border," his best studio work in years. "Healing Hands of Time," his most recent offering, featured, among other things, a sixty-piece orchestra. Honest. With Asleep at the Wheel. (Westbury Music Fair. Aug. 19 at 8.)

Anita Baker—After "Rapture," her mid-eighties commercial breakthrough, the reigning duchess of jazz-flavored R. & B. lapsed into a period of self-consciously sophisticated soul. Her newest record, "Rhythm of Love," is a return to form, and her hornlike singing has never seemed so right. Live, she's pure intensity; her voice shakes the rafters. Get ready for love songs, nothing but love songs. (Jones Beach Theatre. Aug. 20 at 8.)

James (Blood) Ulmer and Quartette Indigo—As if we needed proof that the world is getting weirder every day, the definitive jazz-guitar mangler meets a string quartet—it's a pairing so skewed it just might work. (Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway. 1-718 638-5000. Aug. 20 at 3.)

Laura Branigan—The woman who brought the world that other "Gloria" comes to scenic Long Island. (Westbury Music Fair. Aug. 20 at 7.)

"The Warped Tour"—Sort of a Lollapalooza for the skateboard set, this daylong adventure in ball bearings and broken eardrums features live entertainment by Quicksand, L7, and Queens's favorite hardcore band, Sick of It All. Additional activities include a giant climbing wall and several customized skateboard courses, including a "monster half pipe," whatever the hell that is. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 794-9300. Aug. 21 at noon.)

Foreigner—I wanna know what love is. I want you to show me. (Westbury Music Fair. Aug. 21 at 8. . . . ¶ Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Aug. 29 at 8.)

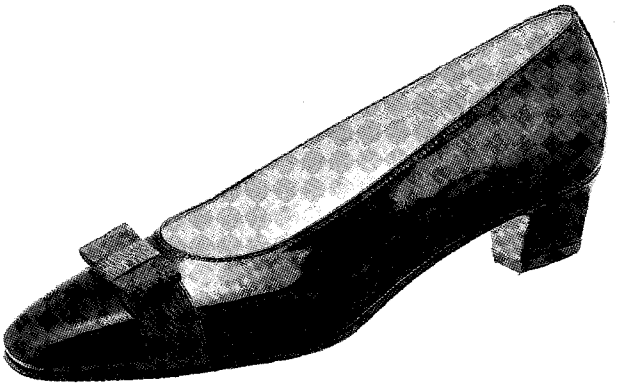
Air Supply—Amid the roiling clouds of adolescence, the Australian duo of Graham Russell (the tall guy) and Russell Hitchcock (the short guy) offered clear sailing—not to mention falsettos that would have made Frankie Valli blush. The boys are celebrating their twentieth anniversary together with an appropriately titled new release, "News from Nowhere," but longtime fans can still count on rich, foamy renditions of "Lost in Love," "All Out of Love," and "The One that You Love," to make every major tragedy just a little more manageable. (Westbury Music Fair. Aug. 22 at 8.)

Van Halen—Ever since original vocalist David Lee Roth hit the road, Van Halen just hasn't been the same. It was always Diamond Dave's wacky neo-Vegas shtick that subverted the band's sophomoric metal leanings; without him, they sound generic. The newly groomed Eddie Van Halen is still a guitar superhero, but even his mighty wang bar can't save the world from the migraine-inducing howl of Sammy Hagar. (Jones Beach Theatre. Aug. 22-23 and Aug. 25 at 8.)

World Music Festival—Master drummer Baba Olatunji and violinist Shankar join other top international acts in a musical salute to the United Nations. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. Aug. 25 at 7.)

Beach Boys—God only knows how many times during the past thirty years even their staunchest supporters have anticipated the big wipeout, but the quintessential California pop band is now entering its fourth decade. Former leader Brian Wilson's emotional troubles (for an update, check out "Brian Wilson: I Just Wasn't Made for These Times," playing this week at the Film Forum) and drummer Dennis Wilson's death by (of all things) drowning would have carried most bands out to sea. But with eternal party animal (and Republican fundraiser) Mike Love cheerleading audiences through the band's countless hits, and baby brother Carl Wilson onstage to preserve and protect Brian's musical legacy, the Beach Boys should still be able to generate a mess of good vibrations. With Christopher Cross. (Jones Beach Theatre. Aug. 26 at 8.)

Wayne Newton—Some say the King of Vegas has lost his voice, but to the loyalists who love him for his patriotic showmanship, that's not necessarily an issue. The former child star wowed them in Vietnam, Lebanon, and the Persian Gulf (the Department of Defense honored him as the only American to entertain troops in all three spots); he wows them in Vegas; and he wows them in Branson, Missouri, where he performs



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World-music star Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, appearing at Town Hall, October 7 and 8.

twenty weeks a year at the fourteen-million-dollar Wayne Newton Theatre. Miss hearing him sing "Danke Schoen" at the peril of your own family values. (Westbury Music Fair. Aug. 27 at 7.)

String Leaders—This quartet is chockablock with major players, all four dedicated to expanding the possibilities of their instruments: violinists Leroy Jenkins and Jason Hwang, cellist Diedre Murray, and bassist Reggie Workman, who's travelled quite a path since he played with John Coltrane. (Brooklyn Museum. Aug. 27 at 3.)

George Benson / Roberta Flack / Tito Puente—The guitarist, the singer, and the man who wrote "Oye Como Va." (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. Aug. 29 at 8.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **nancy la mott** is currently in the midst of an extended run. Dining.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy and Johnny Parker, Fridays and Saturdays to the Freddy Francis trio, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—Aug. 18-19: The Victor Jones quartet. Aug. 25-26: Chris White & the Survivors. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Aug. 15-20: The **mc coy tyner** trio / **bobby hutcherson**. Had pianist Tyner retired after leaving John Coltrane's group in 1965, he'd still be remembered as one of the most brilliant and individualistic players of an era that prized iconoclasm. Tyner never succumbed to the temptations of an electronic age; on his seventies records, he didn't have to plug in his piano to make it thunder and ring with authority. A certain laxness pervaded his eighties work, but his drive returned with the dawn of the nineties. / It took Hutcherson to translate the modernist grammar of sixties jazz onto the vibraphone. He's at his best when gliding into the spare, mysterious ruminations on classics like Eric Dolphy's "Out to Lunch." Hutcherson also loves to strut his piston-mallet stuff on up-tempo numbers. Aug. 21: Chico O'Farril and his Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra. Aug. 22-27: **betty carter** and her trio. For this jazz diva, tempo is king. Nobody can shape a rhythm quite like Carter can; time contracts and expands like a Slinky, and phrases fall unexpectedly, with an utterly personal logic. Half the pleasure of a Carter show, of course, is checking out her band; alumni include the pianists John Hicks (see Bradley's), Cyrus Chestnut, and Stephen Scott. **tania maria** takes over on Aug. 29. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A duskily lit neighborhood bar, where pianists, bassists, and, occasionally, drummers compete for your ear. Truth and beauty usually prevail. Aug. 21-26: **john hicks**. Intense, inventive, and garrulous, this pianist combines the harmonic daring and aggressive stance of McCoy Tyner with the romantic fluency of Roland Hanna—not a bad mix. Dining.

Cajun, 129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (691-6174)—A New Orleans-style restaurant specializing in Dixieland and swing. On Fridays, catch the Canal Street Dixieland Jazz and Blues band. Saturdays belong to the New Atlantic Jazz band.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Pianist **peter mintun** is in charge at the Bemelmans Bar. A genuine throwback to a gentler time, this elegant performer specializes in curios from the twenties and thirties like "Kitten on the Keys," but he has also been known to play cartoon theme songs if the mood (or the crowd) warrants it. Agreeable and reassuring without being over-gracious, he's sort of a curio himself.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—Through Aug. 20: the Claudio Roditi quintet. Aug. 22-27: Marc Morganelli and the Jazz Forum All-Stars. Dining.

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven, 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A sleek piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel. Thursdays through Sundays, **donald johnston** is the featured pianist; on Fridays and Saturdays he performs with a trio. Dining.

Five Spot, 4 W. 31st St. (631-0100)—Set in a mammoth turn-of-the-century ballroom, this jazz club is all marble and gilt, with a few modern touches, such as the zebra-patterned carpet in the V.I.P. room upstairs. Dining.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Across the street from Lincoln Center, this restaurant and club features a handsome bar upstairs and a surreal performance space downstairs. Through Aug. 20: the **ravi coltrane** group. John Coltrane's son hasn't made life easy for himself by taking up the tenor sax. Still, his steady gig with his dad's old teammate, the drummer Elvin Jones, has turned him into a sharp soloist with a genial approach of his own. Aug. 29: The **tim hagan** quartet. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—An Old New York kind of place, with dark wood panelling, white tablecloths, and brass figurine lamps. Aug. 15-19: **roland hanna**. One of the giants of Detroit's fertile piano delta, Hanna is an Ellington scholar, a crackerjack blues player, and a knight of the Liberian government. An open-minded stylist who can be as fastidious as he is funky, Hanna remains delightfully beyond categorization. Aug. 21-26: Piano and bass with Russell Malone and Gerald Cannon.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Saxophonist **pharoah sanders** continues through Aug. 20. Unbridled passion and skill, or an evening of squeakaphonics? Actually, Sanders has mellowed over the years; his sonic maelstroms are now regularly tempered by his soulful balladeering. The Monday-night slot belongs to the **david murray** big band.

Match, 160 Mercer St. (343-0020)—This tragically hip SoHo *boîte* is the place to be every Sunday night, thanks to the **shorty jackson legacy blues band**, featuring the eighty-nine-year-old **laurel watson**. Dining.

Metropolis, 31 Union Sq. W. (675-2300)—A swank basement club, home to high-fibre combos. Tuesdays are given over to the **george gee orchestra**, a seventeen-piece swing band.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—On Mondays, Woody Allen continues his night job as clarinet player in the **new orleans funeral and ragtime orchestra**, a Dixieland-jazz ensemble. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—The great cabaret in the sky, where **vic damone** is the star in residence. At the start of his career, in the postwar forties and fifties, Damone embodied the placid opulence of the era: he was polite and handsome, and his voice was as smooth and lustrous as silk taffeta (and just as stiff). He had a little success in Hollywood and a bit more on vinyl, but more than anything else it's the years of supper clubs and casinos that have given him the distinctive ease that all the Bill Murrays and Harry Connicks of the world can only parody or covet. He doesn't swing, but his phrasing is conversational and the voice itself is something to

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marvel at. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—Thursdays belong to Stan Rubin's big band, Fridays to Lew Anderson's big band and the Kit McClure sextet, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and his Stompers.

Smalls, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—This aptly named club features up-and-coming players jamming late into the night.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A convivial and crowded jazz club where the musicians are always top-shelf. Through Aug. 20: vocalist **kevin mahogany.** *There's little that* this six-foot-four, thirty-six-year-old baritone can't do. He can sing the blues and he can sing ballads, insinuating their lyrics and burnishing their melodies. He can scat and he can sing soul songs and novelty songs. He is also a startling gospel singer, who shouts, hums, growls, and bends notes in two. He has perfect pitch, and like another Kansas City singer, Big Joe Turner, he gives off a constant undercurrent of swinging mockery. Aug. 22-27: The **roy haynes** group. Having played with Lester Young, Charlie Parker, and John Coltrane, Haynes could easily afford to rest on his laurels. Instead, the drummer has made his role as elder statesman an active one, nurturing new talent and handing *down the secrets of leading an airtight* small group. With the recent death of Art Taylor, he's now one of the few remaining bop drummers. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—The Chestnut Room may resemble a hunting lodge decorated by Liberace, but the performances here are no joke. Case in point: **jimmy scott,** who presides through Aug. 20. With good reason, the singer has dropped the "Little" that used to front his name—there's nothing diminutive about his talent, and he can count Madonna and Ray Charles among his admirers. Even on songs you've heard dozens of times before, Scott makes you listen for the next lyric as if it were a password to love and happiness. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through Aug. 20: the **wallace roney** quintet. This young trumpeter is really going to have to *pull out the stops if he's ever to dispel* those Miles-clone charges, which have become a self-inflicted curse. Call it an understandably severe case of hero worship. Aug. *22-27: The* **tommy flanagan** trio. Flanagan now presides over all of jazz piano. Of a poetic cast, he unreels endlessly supple lines, paying them out at whatever speed they demand. He likes to spread the melody out in chords in the first chorus, then compress the song into brand-new single-note improvisations that contain sudden ascending arpeggios, beautiful little countermelodies, and patches of mock double time. Pianist **stephen scott** takes over on Aug. 29. The **vanguard jazz orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—Three days of gifted young saxophonists. Aug. 18-19: **don braden,** followed by **steve wilson** on Aug. 20. Aug. 21: **maria schneider,** the decade's best new arranger, *with her orchestra. Aug. 22-23: Former* Taylor's Wailers saxman **abraham burton.** Aug. 24-26: "Tonight Show" bandleader **kevin eubanks.** Aug. 27: The **gust w. tsilis** quintet.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. Aug. 21-26: Piano, bass, and guitar with **john bunch, bob haggart,** and **bucky pizzarelli.**

ROCK, ETC.

A.K.A., 77 W. Houston St., at Wooster St. (673-7325)—Hip-hop, jazz, and world beat meet in this small, velvet-draped club.

Blarney Star, 43 Murray St. (732-2873)—Home to fine Irish music every Friday night.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Aug. 26: **arthur lee & love.** The Doors once aspired to be as big as Love; thirty years later, fledgling bands still aspire to Love's formula of garage-punk drive, folk-rock jangle, and spacey lyricism. After a long sabbatical from performance (and, some have suggested, from reality), singer Arthur Lee has emerged surprisingly intact. Back in 1966 he was a Hendrix test run, a charismatic talent playing acid-laced pop for the Sunset Strip crowd. In recent New York visits, he's been ably backed by locals Das Damen, reviving classics like "My Flash on You" and reinforcing the illusion that the guy with the bandanna sitting next to you just may be Peter Fonda.

Café Sin-é, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—A small peach-walled storefront usually given over to a young sandals-and-socks sort of crowd.

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—Aug. 26: **bo diddley.** Those pounding tomtoms, those sinewy maracas, that distorted, fuse-blowing guitar: call it hambone, call it shave and a haircut, two bits, *call it anything you want—it's still going to* be the Bo Diddley beat. And once it gets you in its clutches, it's impossible to shake loose.

Continental Divide, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Hipsters, punks, poseurs, N.Y.U. students, the occasional skinhead—a typical East Village bar. Live music nightly.

The Cooler, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—A lavender and stainless-steel vault deep in the heart of the meat district. Aug. 25: **hassan hakmoun and zahar.** Hakmoun and his band hail from Morocco, but they've been living in New York for the past few years. The experience has enriched their music in unusual ways—at times they sound more like Brooklyn than Marrakech. Expect a huge, churning sound: North African rhythms, Western melodies, raga, and Hakmoun's soaring, otherworldly voice. Aug. 26: The Scofflaws. Tuesday nights are given over to experimental d.j. spinoffs.

Don Hill's, 511 Greenwich St. (219-2850)—A tidy little SoHo bar with an above-average P.A. system and topnotch local bands on the docket. . . . ¶ Soul Kitchen, the original seventies funk and R. & B. party, goes down (late) every Monday. . . . ¶ Friday night is Squeeze Box, a vinyl-and-velvet gay glamfest.

Downtime, 251 W. 30th St. (695-2747)—A friendly split-level bar with a dazzling quasi-Cubist paint job and an above-average pool table.

Duplex, 61 Christopher St., at Seventh Ave. (255-5438)—Everyone is a star here—the pianist, the bartender, the waiters, and the audience. The fabulous **dressing room divas** entertain every Friday night.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Aug. 23: **dan zanes.** Aug. 25: Susan McKeown & the Chanting House. **el vez,** "the Mexican Elvis," is your host on Aug. 28. Mr. Vez is far more than your run-of-the-mill Elvis impersonator: he claims to be the illegitimate man-child of the King and *Charo, sings in Spanish, and wears a* layered Velcro outfit that he slowly unpeels and tosses into the audience. With tender vocal support from the lovely Elvetts. The **mingus big band** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Flannery's, 205 W. 14th St. (929-9589)—A well-scrubbed, amiable Irish pub with many of the classic features (pints of Guinness, non-stop TV sports) and a few of the near-classics (a CD jukebox, a portrait of Elvis).

Ibis Supper Club, 327 W. 44th St. (262-1111)—Live music, belly dancing, and an honest-to-God whirling dervish, every Wednesday through Sunday.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. **hot tuna** is in the house on Aug. 21. The **circle jerks** arrive on Aug. 26. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday. The dancers share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Aug. 25: **skeleton key.**

Limelight, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—The rock-and-roll church. Wednesday night is Disco 2000, a fin-de-siècle blowout.

Ludlow Street Café, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—A modest belowstairs room that looks like a spruced-up tenement apartment. Mondays belong to **beat rodeo,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mixture of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, Velvets, and various pop curiosities.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—The Upper East Side blues. Aug. 17: **anders osborn.** Aug. 24: **sugar blue.**

TABLES FOR TWO
Dining around town

Verbena, 54 Irving Pl. (260-5454)—Situated on the ground floor of a hundred-and-thirty-year-old carriage house complete with manicured courtyard garden, Verbena stands out from the current crop of Flatiron-district restaurants like a hollyhock in a field of wild mustard. The charm emanates from the chef and proprietor, Diane Forley, who has fashioned Verbena into a distinctly serene *experience, from the terra-cotta tints of the* décor to the illustrated menus that unfold like vellum chapbooks. Everything here is muted, elegant, and refined—the restaurant as conceived by Jane Austen.

Forley certainly has a novelist's flair for detail: shellfish stew comes with baby clams no bigger than your thumbnail; obese scallops nuzzle in an avocado mousse; sweetbreads rest on a purée of celery root and mashed potatoes studded with toasted hazelnuts and surrounded by morels and fava beans; for dessert, a bittersweet chocolate soufflé is smothered in rum and chocolate-chip ice cream. Her background includes the obligatory apprenticeship in Paris and a stint at a local landmark (Petrossian, 1991-92). But the defining moment of her career may have been at Brown University when she wrote an honors thesis titled "The History of Gastronomy in Nineteenth-Century France, Examined Through the Works of Balzac and Flaubert."

The academic spirit is well nourished at Verbena: the restaurant offers courses on herbal folklore and edible flowers. Classes meet in the courtyard garden, and, in the *grand culinary-pedagogical tradition, you* get to eat your homework. (Entrées $22-$26. Open daily for dinner.)

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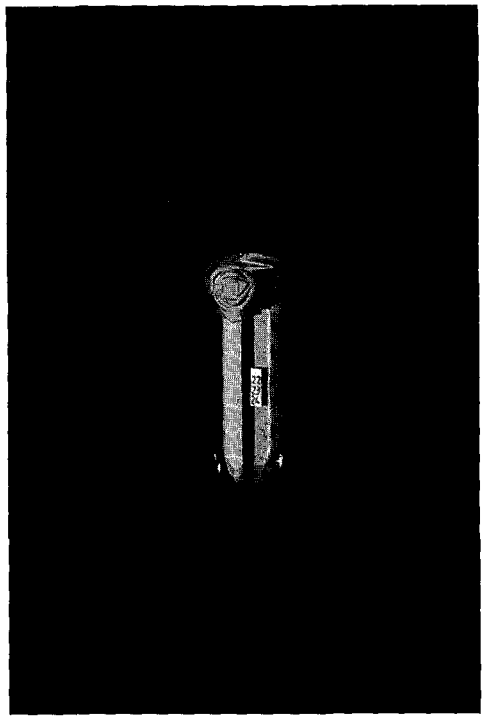

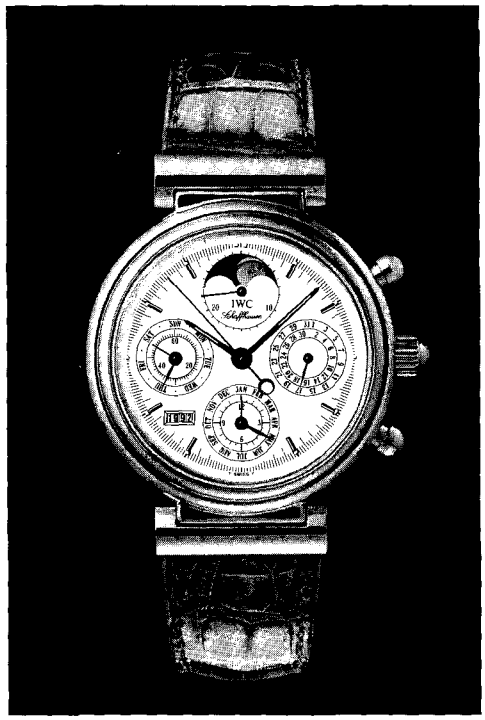

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Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—Aug. 18: **G LOVE & SPECIAL SAUCE,** a dynamite trio from Philadelphia that plays amazingly loose and swinging rap songs—funky odes to John Lee Hooker, hoops, beer, and other lowdown pleasures. Aug. 24: The brisk grunge of **EVERCLEAR.** Aug. 26: **EL VEZ** wiggles over from Fez.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Aug. 18: **PETER CASE.** Aug. 23: **ROBIN LANE.** Aug. 24: **RICHARD BARONE.**

Monkey Bar, 60 E. 54th St. (838-2600)—Beyond the monkey murals, there's a bright see-and-be-seen dining arena that's perfect for committing high-profile indiscretions in a strapless gown. But the place to be is the dark and crowded bar up front, by the fine pianist, where the bar stools look like stuffed olives. You perch on the pimiento. Dining.

Nell's, 246 W. 14th St. (675-1567)—A Victorian-style club, home to an eclectic crowd of downtown youngsters dancing to funk, techno-pop, and, sometimes, jazz. Monday night is Funky Buddha, with live bands and d.j. Derek Corley "on the wheels."

Paddy Reilly's Music Bar, 519 Second Ave., at 29th St. (686-1210)—**BLACK 47** usually plays on Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights.

Les Poulets, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and the occasional cha-cha. Dining.

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—The walls simulate a log cabin, smoke blows through the nostrils of a buffalo head, a horse trailer has been converted into a bar, and you get peanuts for eating and, sometimes, throwing.

Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (247-0200)—Ballroom dancing on Thursdays and Sundays. The rest of the week it's another dark, sweaty rock club, with flannel-clad stage divers and the occasional whirling mosh pit.

"The Countess of Altamira and Her Daughter," by Francisco Goya, at the Metropolitan Museum, starting September 12.

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and the bossa nova. Aug. 24: The **SUN RA ARKESTRA.** The maestro has returned to Saturn, but his band plays on under the skillful direction of longtime saxophonist John Gilmore. The unexpected is still to be expected. Aug. 28: Salsa with **LA INDIA.** Dining.

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Female singers who play guitar and write their own songs seem to be everywhere these days; they've come a long way since the days of Joni and Joan and Laura. Smart and foul-mouthed, they've discovered that you don't have to be Courtney (or Patti Smith, for that matter) to sing about kissing girls and leaving men and loving sex. **ALANIS MORISSETTE** (Aug. 16) is one of the newest entries, and the rapid chart climb of her début album, "Jagged Little Pill" (on Madonna's Maverick Records), suggests either mainstream acceptance of this new breed of not-so-nice grrrls or a widespread fondness for young ladies who sing about oral sex. Morissette's bummed-out stance wears a bit thin over an album's worth of material, but at her best this alterna-pop sensation delivers her message with clear insight and a startlingly genuine voice that belies her twenty years.

Webster Hall, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Wednesday is drag night. Psychedelic Thursdays feature grunge acts and cheap beer.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Aug. 19: Skadanks. **EL VEZ** finishes up a busy week (see Fez and Maxwell's) here on Aug. 27. Mondays are Konkrete Jungle, an evening of dub, jungle, and trip-hop.

ART

Eye-Openers

CULTURE vultures are facing a fall devoid of new blockbusters. If you want to see the monster Monet exhibition, you'll have to go to Chicago, and the big shows at the Museum of Modern Art (Piet Mondrian, opening October 1) and the Whitney (Robert Frank, November 16) have already made their American débuts, in Washington. Meanwhile, the fall schedule at the Metropolitan—which used to be the blockbuster center of the universe—is full of fakes. "Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt" (October 10) offers the real things next to imitations that have been "deattributed" (in the art historians' jargon), and in "Goya in the Metropolitan Museum of Art" (September 12), the Spanish master will find his œuvre trimmed, too—some of the most famous paintings in the Met's collection, such as the coquettish "Majas on a Balcony," have fallen from grace. (Previewing what life will be like if the anti-N.E.A. Snopeses have their way, both exhibitions are drawn entirely from the museum's collection.)

If you want to see some art from out of town, just go across Fifth Avenue. The National Academy of Design is mounting the work of two craggy Norwegian masters, Edvard Munch and Harald Sohlberg (October 12). The Guggenheim is giving Claes Oldenburg a gargantuan retrospective (October 6) covering every phase of his career, from his funky early days, when he was selling papier-mâché bottle caps and cigarette butts out of a storefront on the Lower East Side, to the soft-sculpture sixties, to his current stage as a cranker-out of art investments. (This exhibit, too, has already played Washington.) The year's most exquisite show may turn out to be the Asia Society's exhibition of painted screens from the Idemitsu, a private museum in Tokyo (October 18).

There will be more life on the gallery scene. In October, Matthew Marks will use his splendid barn on West 22nd Street to show Brice Marden's new paintings. Lately Chinese calligraphy has influenced Marden's trademark loopy scrawls, and a faint element of biomorphism, à la Henry Moore, has crept in. In November, to mark the publication in book form of "Porkopolis," Sue Coe's dark vision of the meat industry, Galerie St. Etienne will exhibit several of the more than one hundred Dantean paintings from the series. Five other masters will be showing new work, too. In September, Gagosian will offer sculpture by Roy Lichtenstein (uptown) and paintings by Robert Rauschenberg (downtown), and Marlborough will unveil Marisol's first solo show in six years. In October, Richard Serra will weigh in at Gagosian downtown, and Red Grooms's latest fantasies will take over at Marlborough.

Two photo shows to catch: in September, Marilyn Minter (a student of Diane Arbus's who turned to painting) exhibits a suite of black-and-white photographs at Postmasters. Shot in 1969 but not shown until this year, they are harrowing portraits of her mother, a well-heeled drug addict. And in October, another harrower, Joel-Peter Witkin, gets a retrospective at the Guggenheim's Mapplethorpe Gallery.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"American Relief Sculpture" features bronze, marble, and plaster works by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Herbert Adams, Karl Bitter, Olin Levi Warner, and others. Through Oct. 16. . . . ¶ The fifty-three paintings, drawings, and watercolors that make up the Annenberg collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist masterworks are on view. . . . ¶ More than a hundred painted-glass roundels produced in the European Lowlands between 1480 and 1560. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ "An Egyptian Bestiary," a large non-petting zoo of falcons, baboons, hippos, and ibis, in stone, ivory, gold, bronze, and wood. Through Oct. 15. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's roof garden is open, when weather permits. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The design exhibitions here are always fun, and "Mutant Materials," a handsomely mounted exploration of the way recent technology has

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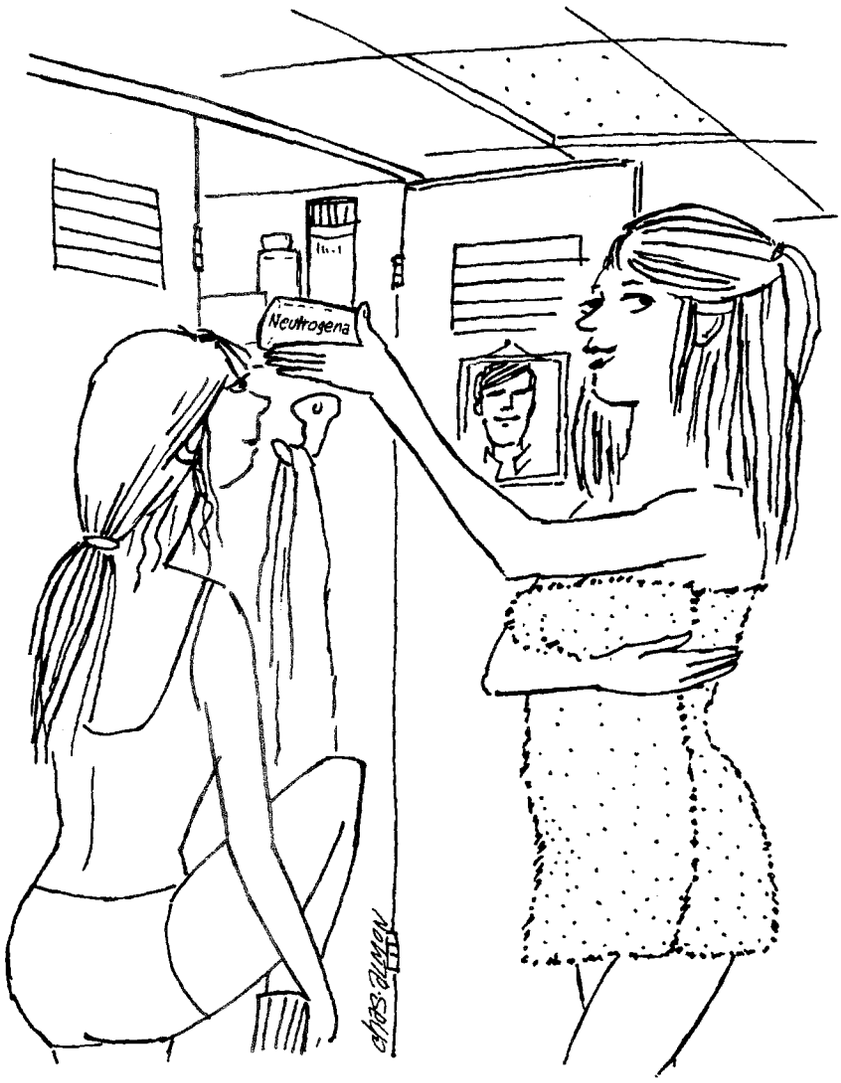

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transformed industrial design, is one of the best. In what other museum could you find an orange fake-fur light-switch cover, Nike sneakers, and a baseball glove on view? Many objects, such as a squishy pen that molds to the shape of the user's fingertips, are displayed on a shelf, where the visitor is invited to palpate them. Through Aug. 27. . . . ¶ "Video Spaces: Eight Installations" presents some widely divergent sculptural uses of the medium. The best piece is by Tony Oursler: a tiny, limp doll with the face of a screaming woman projected onto its head. A challenging and sometimes rewarding exhibition. Through Sept. 12. . . . ¶ "Masterworks from the Louise Reinhardt Smith Collection," thirty-six paintings, drawings, and sculptures by, among others, Kandinsky, Picasso, Monet, Seurat, Braque, Degas, and Moore. Through Aug. 22. . . . ¶ Leon Levinstein's street photographs of people in New York neighborhoods from the fifties through the seventies. Through Oct. 12. . . . ¶ "Artist's Choice: Elizabeth Murray." A show of paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints by seventy women, including Frida Kahlo, Agnes Martin, Louise Bourgeois, Georgia O'Keeffe, Joan Mitchell, and Eva Hesse. Through Aug. 22. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Georg Baselitz." A large survey of work by the East German painter famous for his upside-down figures. The explosion of neo-expressionism in the early eighties left a bad taste with viewers who lean toward more self-conscious art—heavy paint trowelled onto canvas didn't strike everyone as a guarantee of deep emotion. Baselitz, who had been earnestly pursuing his Sturm-und-Drang vision since the sixties, was always the most convincing artist of the bunch. His ragged painterly style remains assured: purposely rough (to convey the full flavor of torment), but often beautiful. Through Sept. 17. . . . ¶ "Josef Albers: Glass, Color, and Light." A beautiful and unusual exhibition of paintings on glass, glass constructions, oil paintings, and photographs. The German émigré Albers is best known in this country for his color studies, his teaching (at Yale), and his seemingly interminable series "Homage to the Square"; on the evidence of this show, he was far livelier as a young contributor to that hotbed of high Modernist art and design, the Bauhaus. His earliest uses of glass filter the Gothic stained-glass aesthetic through the scrim of German Expressionism and Kandinsky's abstractionism. But with "Park" (circa 1924), he found a balance between calm geometric order and the excitement of optical pulsation. Most of the subsequent works, on opaque sand-blasted glass, combine the mechanical Bauhaus aesthetic with Mondrian's neoplasticism—and they're superb. Through Sept. 17. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A terrific and illuminating double bill: "Edward Hopper and the American Imagination" (through Oct. 15) and "Florine Stettheimer: Manhattan Fantastica" (through Nov. 5). Hopper's work, with its solitary figures moving like somnambulists through otherwise vacant streets and interiors, embodies a very American vision of urban loneliness transformed by inexplicable moments of transcendence. Stettheimer, by contrast, epitomized the fertile marriage of café society and the avant-garde, in both her art and her life. Her effervescent paintings record the milieu she cultivated (it was quite a set: Carl Van Vechten, Parker Tyler, Virgil Thomson, and Marcel Duchamp were all among the regulars) in moods of brittle irony and poetic reverie. . . . ¶ "Views from Abroad: European Perspectives on American Art." Through Oct. 1. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

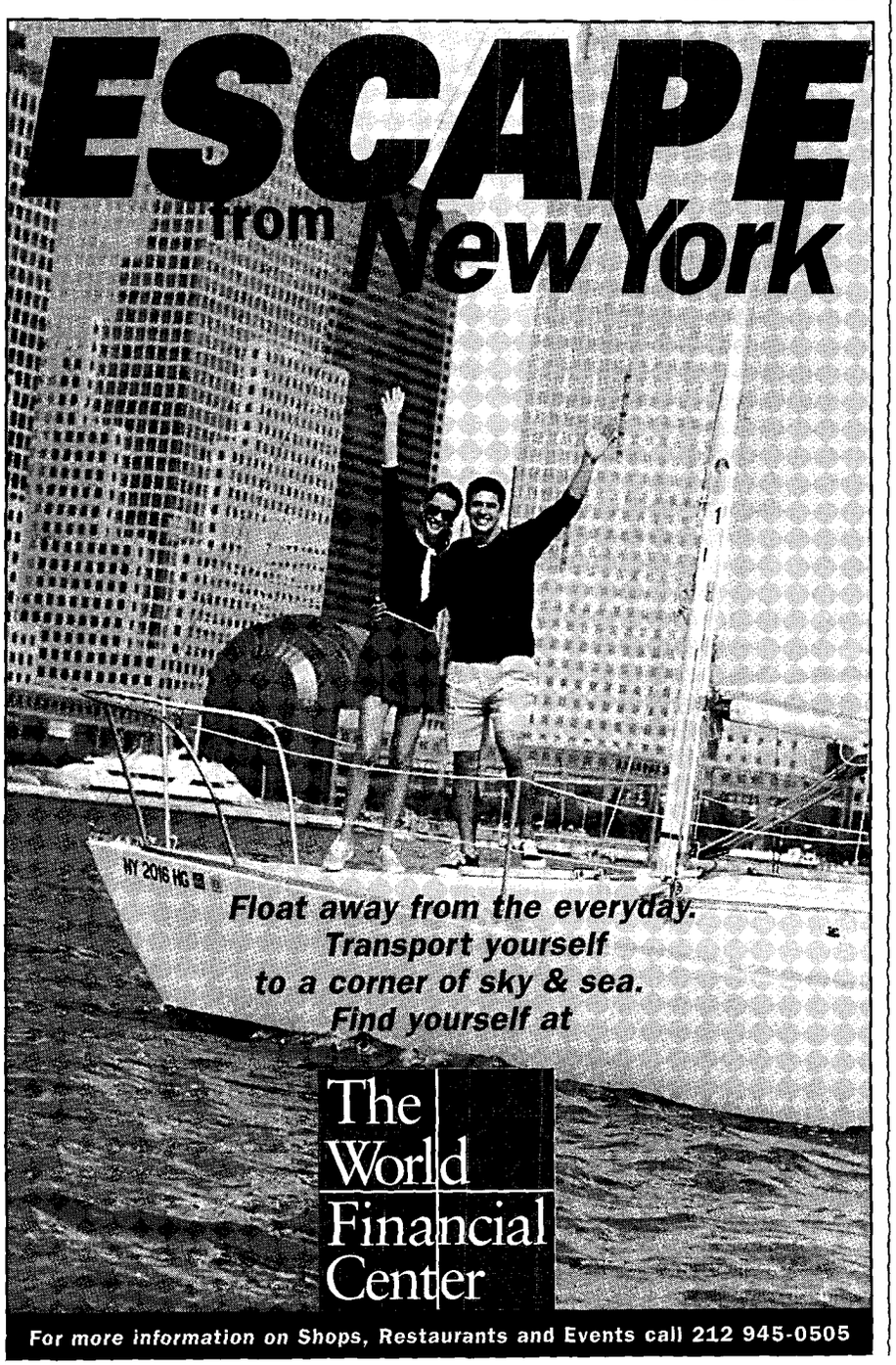
American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A hundred and forty botanical watercolors, illustrations, engravings, and lithographs are on view; a third of them are of orchids. Among the artists represented are Pierre-Joseph Redouté, Margaret Mee, Marilena Pistoia, and Georg Dionys Ehret. . . . ¶ The skeletons of some one hundred saurischian and ornithischian dinosaurs have been cleaned and repositioned, and they're waiting for you. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"The Pictographs of Adolph Gottlieb," a series of sixty gridded paintings with Native American, Freudian, Joycean, and other imagery, in free-associative compositions. Through Aug. 27. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—Monkeys acting like humans, monkeys in their natural state, and monkeys as divine figures: these images grace sculptures, prints, and objects from India, Southeast Asia, Tibet, China, and Japan in a show called . . . "Monkey." Through Sept. 10. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—The fifteenth annual "Artists in the Marketplace" exhibition features the work of thirty-six young New York-area artists. Through Sept. 10. . . . ¶ "Traces: The Body in Contemporary Photography" presents work by Juan Carlos Alóm, Gerardo Suter, Luis González-Palma, Eugenia Vargas, Lyle Ashton Harris, Lorna Simpson, Jeanne Dunning, and others. Through Sept. 10. . . . ¶ "David Padilla Cabrera y Linda Matalon." Paintings on wood by the former; drawings and sculptures using gauze, graphite, wax, tar, and wire by the latter. Through Sept. 10. (Open Wednesdays, 3 to 9; Thursdays and Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Kitsch to Corbusier: Wallpapers from the 1950s." The best of these exuberant wall coverings exhibit an eccentric beauty far removed from the slickness that rules the market now. In the fifties, there was something for everyone: spaceships for the boys' room, French poodles strolling beside the



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Eiffel Tower for Mom's bath. The white-bread fantasia that the designers created has become as deeply entrenched in the American collective unconscious as Mt. Rushmore, and even the silliest of their efforts have something to say to us. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ A display of jewelry and accessories from the museum's collection, including Egyptian mummy beads and gold snuff-boxes. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ "The Structure of Style: Dutch Modernism in the Applied Arts 1880-1930." Through Aug. 20. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Contemporary British Architecture," a survey of recent projects, composed of drawings, paintings, photographs, and models, from the last four summer exhibitions of Britain's Royal Academy of Arts. The visions of Richard Rogers, Norman Foster, Lucy Malein, Nicholas Grimshaw, and the late James Stirling are among those on view. Through Sept. 17. . . . ¶ A display of American Impressionist paintings from the Academy's collection includes works by Chase, Sargent, Hassam, and Parker. Through Sept. 15. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W.—"On the Avenue, Fifth Avenue," a trim little exhibition of prints, photographs, architectural drawings, and historical objects devoted to the evolution of our great thoroughfare, which suggests that once upon a time New York really *was* paradise. A photograph of St. Luke's Hospital, at 54th Street, reveals that in 1865 the Avenue was a country lane. Architect George B. Post's cross-sectional view of Cornelius Vanderbilt's mansion makes even a servant's life in those days look dreamy. (Don't miss the portrait in the corridor outside, by an unknown painter, of Edward Hyde, Viscount Cornbury—an eighteenth-century governor of New York—posed coquettishly in full drag, with an ivory fan. Really.) Through Sept. 17. . . . ¶ In "Treasury of the Past," an object or a set of objects representing each year from 1750 to 1950 is on view. Through Sept. 17. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Writers in Wartime: Looking at World War II," a selection of diaries, letters, first editions, and working proofs by Mann, Auden, Woolf, Hellman, Steinbeck, Kerouac, and others. (Berg Collection. Closed Mondays.) . . . ¶ "What Price Freedom" features twenty objects, from a Jefferson draft of the Declaration of Independence to a student handbill distributed in Tiananmen Square. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall.) . . . ¶ Part one of "The Collecting Adventure, 1895-1995" examines the way the library has documented and preserved avant-garde and pop culture. Through Sept. 1. (Salomon Room.) . . . ¶ The librarians have chosen a hundred and fifty books, ranging from rare editions to dog-eared paperbacks, as the "Books of the Century." (Third Floor Gallery.) (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Rd., Long Island City—With its twelve galleries and peaceful, ivy-walled center garden, this museum is an oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of the artist's sculptures. (Open Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Dan Witz—Large, oddly shaped canvases of such sights as a circle of businessmen performing yoga. Through Sept. 5. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Open daily, 9 to 7.)

"It is not enough to conquer, one must learn how to seduce."
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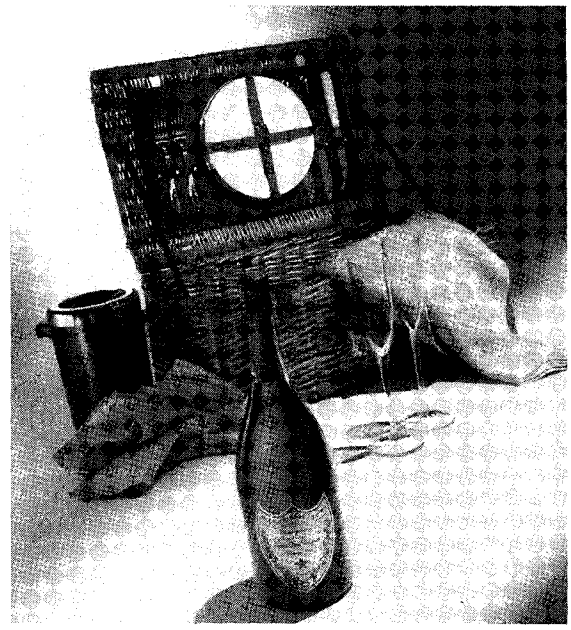

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"MALE DESIRE"—Summer camp, in the form of homoerotic art by thirty artists. The show is not (or not merely) an exercise in lubriciousness. We are reminded, for example, that George Bellows and Grant Wood were just as obsessed with manliness as was Tom of Finland, whose simpering black-leather bimbos are starting to look like classics. Rockwell Kent's brawny sailor boys and J. C. Leyendecker's flawless preppies could have moonlighted as models for Paul Cadmus's very amusing "YMCA Locker Room." Also included are six etchings by David Hockney from his influential suite based on poems by C. P. Cavafy, and work by Eric Fischl, Keith Haring, Larry Rivers, John Button, and Andy Warhol. Through Sept. 16. (Ryan, 24 W. 57th St.)

"COLLAGE: MADE IN AMERICA"—This exceptionally well-chosen exhibition has been hung in a manner that suggests a Victorian salon; the visitor is provided with a map like the ones that come with boxes of chocolates, and it all makes for a jolly, if haphazard, browse. A terrifying urban nightmare by Sue Coe hangs cheek by jowl with a weird, uncharacteristic Cornell—a lurid Ektachrome sunset with a crude figure propped up in front. Nancy Grossman's plausibly Picassoid pastiche of black gouache and yellowed newsprint, "The Cubist Club at St. Mark's Place," nestles next to a panel of Chris Burden's cancelled checks. Romare Bearden's jazz quartet is a textbook exercise in the medium: a bold, colorful composition made of snipped bits of paper which just flies. Through Aug. 25. (Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At GALERIE ST. ETIENNE, 24 W. 57th St.: Recent acquisitions of work by self-taught artists and by German and Austrian artists. Those represented include Earl Cunningham, Grandma Moses, and Horace Pippin among the former, and Lovis Corinth, Oskar Kokoschka, Käthe Kollwitz, and Egon Schiele among the latter. Through Sept. 8. (Closed Mondays.) . . . MARIAN GOODMAN, 24 W. 57th St.: Among the works here are a new painting by Richard Artschwager, six oils by Gerhard Richter, and "Cadmium & Mud & Titanium & Lead & Ferrous Oxide & So On," by Lawrence Weiner. Through Aug. 30. . . . ROBERT MILLER, 41 E. 57th St.: Paintings, sculptures, and photographs by, among others, Louise Bourgeois, St. Clair Cemin, Gilbert and George, William Eggleston, and Adam Fuss. Through Aug. 25. . . . WERNER, 21 E. 67th St.: Paintings and sculpture by Georg Baselitz, James Lee Byars, Per Kirkeby, Markus Lüpertz, Sigmar Polke, and Don Van Vliet. Through Aug. 18.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

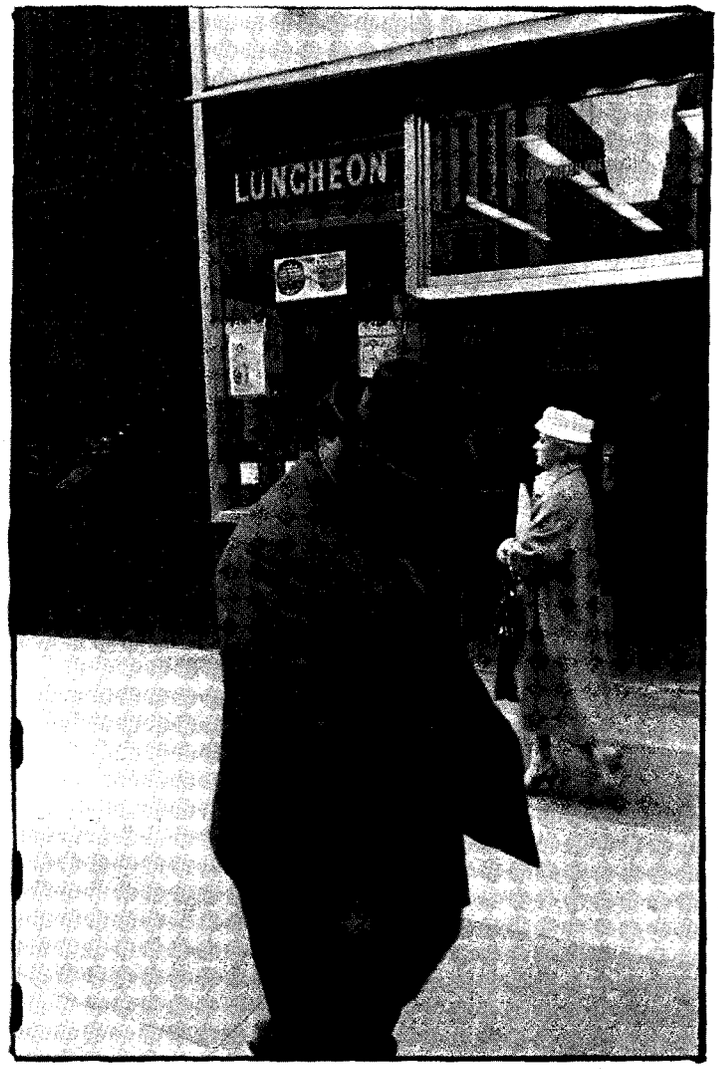
GLENN LIGON—More cool, tasteful rage from a leading political artist; now he has taken on boxing. The sport provides a brutal escape for young black men, he suggests, and the eight punching bags here serve as a neat metaphor for society's treatment of them. It's a little *too* neat, though, and the texts, by Muhammad Ali and Leon Spinks, are opaque. Through Aug. 25. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

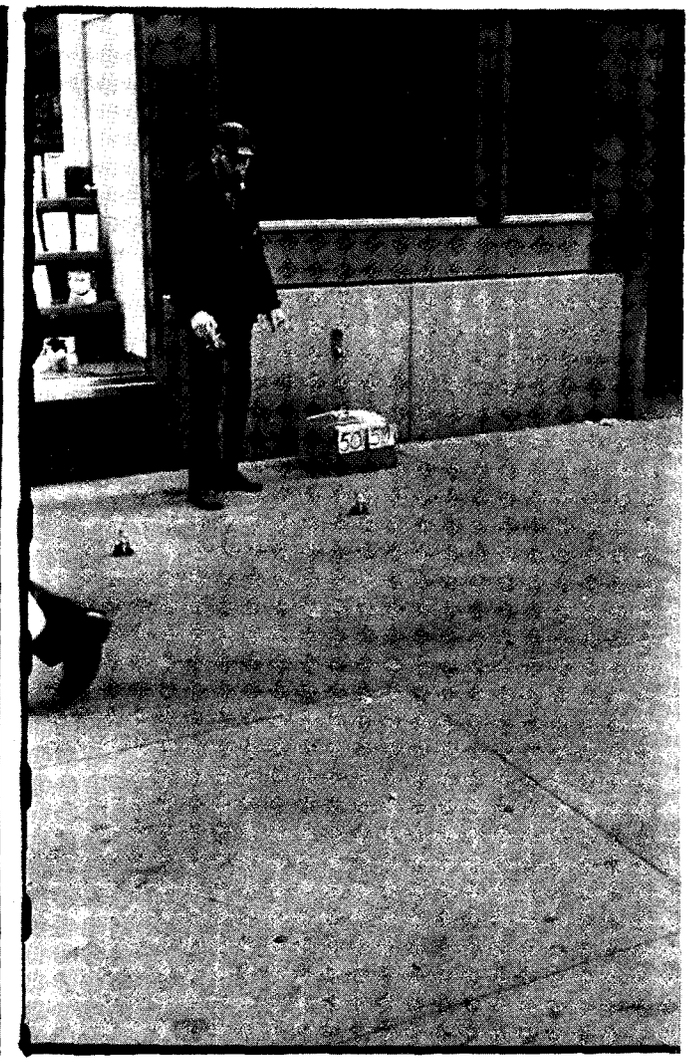
"NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS"—Paintings, drawings, and sculptures celebrating thirty years of preservation (as a result of the 1965 Landmarks Law). On view are a seven-foot mink-covered Empire State Building, by Tony Lordi, and works by Berenice Abbott, Richard Haas, Maggie Hopp, Esteban Chavez, and others. Through Aug. 25. (Ingbar, 568 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

OTHER VENUES

"AFFIRMATIVE ACTIONS: ARTISTS AT WORK"—Creative Time's twelfth annual "Art in the Anchorage" exhibition, held in the vaults of the Brooklyn Bridge, consists of nine large-scale installations that cross disciplines and mediums: a "Medicinal Garden," by Joan Bankemper; a large suspended model of the Brooklyn Bridge, by Karin Giusti in collaboration with faculty and students from Brooklyn College; a Friday-and-Saturday-night cabaret; theatrical performances; skateboarding displays and a competition; and much more. Through Sept. 14. (Cadman Plaza West at Front St., Brooklyn. Thursdays through Sundays, 1 to 6. For schedules, directions, and other information, call 206-6674.)

"SAMUEL PARSONS, JR. AND THE ART OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE"—Parsons (1844-1923) designed several New York City parks, among them Thomas Jefferson, DeWitt Clinton, and Canal Street. His thirty years of service in the Parks Department are celebrated with original plans and renderings, archival photographs, postcards, and memorabilia. Through Sept. 8. (Arsenal Gallery, Fifth Ave. at 64th St.)





Four images from the series "From the Bus, New York" (1958), in "Robert Frank: Moving Out," a retrospective of more than

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Grand Central Terminal—In the Beaux Arts Main Waiting Room (where one imagines a sumptuous banquet being held while an enormous crowd waltzes in the Main Concourse) stands "Man with a Heart," Jonathan Borofsky's rather cold twenty-foot sculptures of men (one black, one white) with glowing, beating hearts. . . . ¶ Steve Gerberich's witty, slapdash sculptural accumulations are tucked into a glass-walled space across from Grand Central Books. Gerberich treats social and environmental themes with satisfying irreverence: "Shooting Gallery" offers a bison on a spit above an antique cabinet full of grenades, toy guns, and cowboy boots lined up like a naturalist's specimens—the whole kit and caboodle resting on a zebra-skin rug. The smallest work is "Hummingbird Heater," a sculptural haiku in which a toy bird dangles in the hot air inside a small, old space heater.

Socrates Sculpture Park—"Pop-up," new works with Pop influences, including Michael Tong's giant Buddha head, made from rusting steel plates, and Karin Giusti's hundred-and-fifty-foot strand of giant "pearls," complete with hydraulic oyster. Also on view are pieces by Gunilla Bandolin, Alberto Riaño, Barbara Grygutis, and Nancy Rubins. Through Sept. 17. (Broadway at Vernon Blvd., Long Island City. Open daily, 10 to sunset.)

Sculpture Center at Roosevelt Island—A mostly outdoor installation of works by six artists. Heather Nicol's "Pick Me," a collection of altered and illuminated prom gowns hanging from the ceiling of an atrium, is a coup de théâtre. Through Nov. 15. (North end of Main St. For information, call 832-4540.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Karl Struss (1886-1981)—Romantic platinum and palladium prints of the New York that was, by the Manhattan-born Photo-Secessionist and cinematographer ("Sunrise," "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," "The Fly"). Through Oct. 14. (Equitable Gallery, Seventh Ave. at 52nd St. Opens Saturdays at noon.)

"'Dance Ink': Frame by Frame"—Photographs commissioned for the elegantly choreographed dance quarterly, by Josef Astor, Sylvia Plachy, Andrew Eccles, Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, William Wegman, and others. Through Aug. 31. (Furman Gallery, adjacent to the Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. Open daily, 1:30 to 9.)

"Large Bodies"—Large-scale photographs of various parts of the body, by, among others, Cindy Sherman, John Coplans, Chuck Close, Andres Serrano, and Bill Jacobson. Through Sept. 1. (Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St.)

"On Holiday"—Delightful views of swimmers, sunbathers, operagoers, picnickers, and baseball players, by Max Dupain, J. H. Lartigue, Danielle Weil, John Loengard, Louise Dahl-Wolfe, and others. Through Sept. 2. (Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

"Summer Salon II (Pictures We Like)"—An eclectic gathering of photos by well-known artists and by artists underrepresented in New York, including prints by Robert Frank, James Wojcik, Dick Arentz, Rhona Bitner, Nat Fein, and Weegee. Through Aug. 31. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St.)

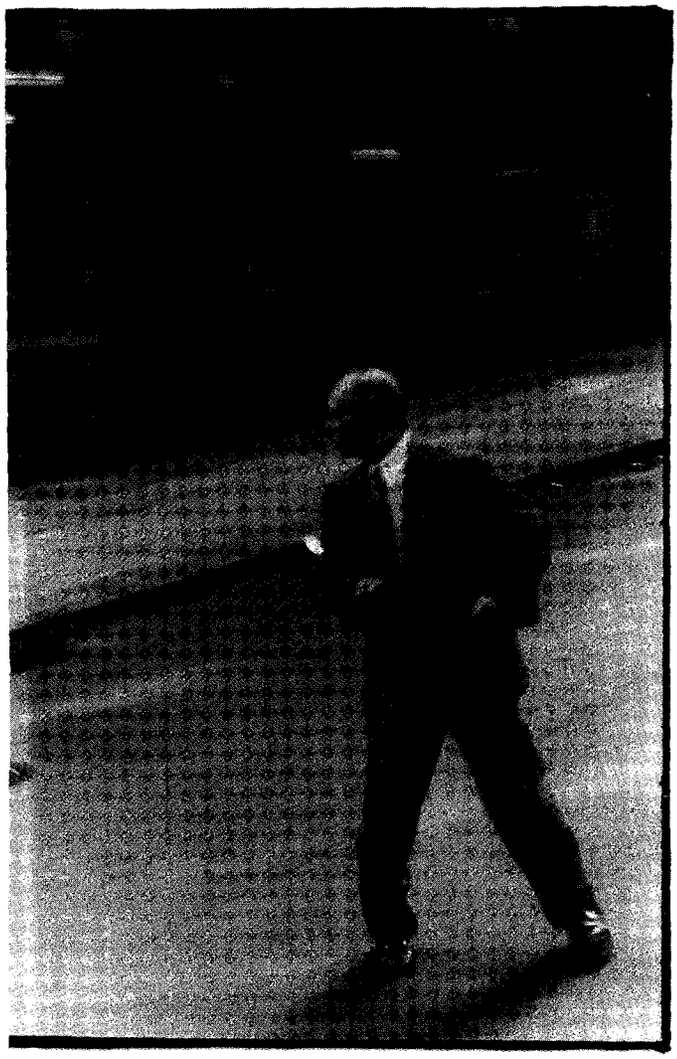
"Under 8 x 10 Inches"—Small prints by more than thirty artists, including George Tice, Evelyn Hofer, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Caponigro, André Kertész, and Jill Seymour. Through Sept. 1. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

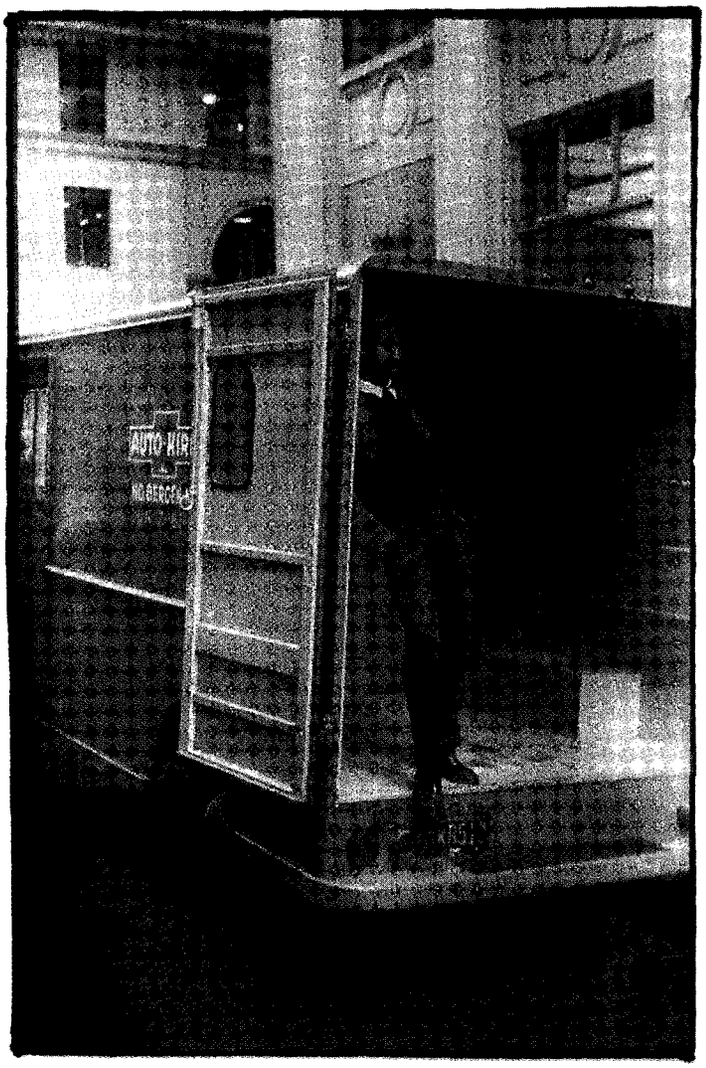
International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—"Nagasaki Journey: The Photographs of Yosuke Yamahata." Pictures taken in that city on August 10, 1945, the day after the bombing, by a twenty-eight-year-old Japanese Army photographer. Through Oct. 1. . . . ¶ The war in the Pacific, as seen through the cover photographs and photo essays of *Life* magazine correspondents. Through Oct. 1. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—"An American Century of Photography: From Dry-Plate to Digital—The Hallmark Photographic Collection." Through Sept. 10. . . . ¶ "Eyes on an Era." Pictures from the thirties through the sixties by photojournalist Irving Haberman. Through Sept. 10. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**John Batho**, Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Aug. 31. . . . **Harold Feinstein**, Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. Closed Thursdays, open Saturdays; through Sept. 15. . . . **Jo Ann Verburg**, Mann, 42 E. 76th St. Through Aug. 18.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art and the Bronx Museum of the Arts.)





a hundred and fifty photographs that will be on display at the Whitney Museum from November 16 to February 11.

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CLASSICAL MUSIC

Entitlements

THE crowd always parades its new finery on opening night at the Metropolitan Opera, but this season the house itself will sport an updated look, at least in the accessories department. After years of snobbishly refusing to offer supertitles—insisting that the theatre's lofty proscenium makes them awkward—the Met is introducing its own version, "Met Titles," emitted from vacuum-fluorescent displays on the backs of the house's thirty-eight hundred seats. You can switch the units on and off at will, and you can't see even a glimmer from the ones on either side of yours.

Met Titles will certainly help ease the audience into Tchaikovsky's "The Queen of Spades" (which opens, in a new production, on October 26) and Janáček's "The Makropulos Case" (which will receive its first Met performance on January 5); both operas might achieve standard-repertoire status now that the audience can follow what the performers are singing about. The Tchaikovsky (with Leonie Rysanek and Dmitri Hvorostovsky in the cast, and the hypercharged Valery Gergiev on the podium) should be a season highlight.

New York City Opera introduced supertitles to the United States in 1983, and they'll aid audiences at the company's new production of Hindemith's "Mathis der Maler" (which opens the season, on September 7). Hindemith's centennial accounts for his richer-than-usual representation in this year's programming. The fiftieth anniversary of Bartók's death is influencing even more programs. The Bard Music Festival revives its Bartók convocation (currently in progress upstate) at Alice Tully Hall, on November 4 and 5; the Figueroa Duo plays his violin sonatas at the Miller Theatre, on October 22; Todd Crow explores his piano music, also at the Miller, on November 28; and the Budapest Festival Orchestra alights at Carnegie Hall for a mother-tongue performance of his opera "Bluebeard's Castle" and his First Piano Concerto (with Zoltán Kocsis), on November 11.

In October, Maurizio Pollini embarks on a newsworthy traversal of Beethoven's piano sonatas, at Carnegie Hall. In November, Mitsuko Uchida, in an exciting three-concert series at Alice Tully Hall, delves into the piano music of Schubert and Schoenberg—an odd coupling until you consider the Viennese connection. Murray Perahia, often sidelined of late by an injury, has scheduled a recital for December 10 at Avery Fisher Hall; concertgoers should keep their fingers crossed for this prince among pianists.

Other high points: the hand-and-glove duo of soprano Felicity Lott and mezzo-soprano Ann Murray (Alice Tully Hall, October 23); violinist Gidon Kremer and the never-to-be-missed pianist Martha Argerich teaming up for sonatas (Carnegie Hall, November 1); and the Arditti String Quartet, performing the New York première of Elliott Carter's Quartet No. 5 (Alice Tully Hall, November 16).

On the orchestra-with-voice front, the New York Philharmonic salutes composer Lukas Foss with selections including his setting of the "Song of Songs" (Avery Fisher Hall, November 9-11), and the American Symphony Orchestra rescues Max Bruch's 1872 secular oratorio "Odysseus" from oblivion (Avery Fisher Hall, November 10). Listeners who wonder what concerts of the future will be like will find plenty to ponder at the Kitchen (November 8-12), where live performances by David Hykes's Harmonic Choir and Harmonic Core will be electronically pumped to the Thoronet Abbey in southern France and instantaneously returned—enhanced by the abbey's acoustics—to the audience in New York. Imagine the possibilities!

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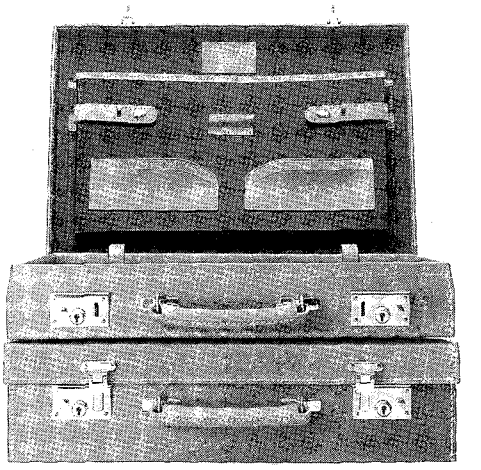
CONCERTS

Mostly Mozart—Final performances of the season. Aug. 16: The St. Lawrence String Quartet performs early works by three masters—Mozart's C-Major Quartet (K. 157, written when he was sixteen), Mendelssohn's Quartet No. 1 (twenty), and Schubert's "Trout" Quintet (the happy product of a twenty-two-year-old on vacation). Pianist Jon Kimura Parker and double-bass player Timothy Cobb assist in the Schubert. . . . ¶ Aug. 17: The Mostly Mozart Orchestra settles into the key of D Major to perform Mozart's Symphony No. 31 (K. 297, the "Paris"), Haydn's D-Major Cello Concerto (with Janos Starker), and Cherubini's Symphony in D Major. Soprano Alessandra Marc rounds out the program with arias by Handel, Mozart, and Bellini. Gerard Schwarz conducts. . . . ¶ Aug. 18-19: The season concludes with a concert of very early and very late Mozart and very middle Beethoven. Mozart's three-movement Symphony No. 1 (K. 16) was probably written in late 1764, when the family was on tour in London; apparently the project kept the eight-year-old composer occupied while his father recuperated from a throat ailment. Twenty-seven years later, the Requiem marked the composer's terminus. (In this performance, Mr. Schwarz will employ the traditional completion of the piece by Mozart's student Franz Xaver Süssmayr.) Beethoven's "Choral Fantasy" for Piano, Chorus, and Orchestra rounds out the program. The Mostly Mozart Orchestra will be joined by the Pro Arte Chorale, pianist Peter Serkin, soprano Janet Williams, mezzo-soprano Laura Tucker, contralto Nathalie Stutzmann, tenor Hiroyuki Yoshida, and baritone William Stone. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Evenings at 8, with pre-concert recitals or lectures at 7.)

Frances Lucey—In her New York début recital, the Irish soprano (whose advance European notices are a repertory of superlatives) sings music by Handel, Schubert, Berlioz, Duparc, Chausson, Schoenberg, and Fernando Obradors, as well as traditional Irish folk songs. Pianist Donald Wages assists. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. Aug. 16 at 5:45.)

Bargemusic—Pianist Mihae Lee, cellist Ronald Thomas, and Johannes Brahms anchor New York's floating concert hall in the dog days of August. Aug. 17 at 6 and Aug. 20 at 4: A program that includes Brahms's Clarinet Trio and Dvořák's Piano Quartet, with clarinettist Thomas Hill, violinist Mark Peskanov, and violist Marcus Thompson rounding out the performing roster. . . . ¶ Aug. 24 at 7:30 and Aug. 27 at 4: A horn trio by Haydn, Bach's C-Minor Cello Suite, and Brahms's B-Major Piano Trio; French hornist Robert Routch and violinist Lynn Chang assist. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. The Aug. 17 event is a candlelit dinner-concert.)

Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie-Bremen—At a time when politicians in the United States outshout one another in decrying the funding of the arts, Americans might pause to consider the very different philosophy of the city of Bremen, on the northern coast of Germany. Though Bremen has been a leading commercial center for a millennium, the city had never managed to develop much of an artistic scene. (It's not just a coincidence that its best-known musical image is the Bremen Town-Musicians, the Grimm Brothers' storybook assemblage of a crowing rooster, a braying ass, and so on.) Several years ago, Bremen's business and government leaders addressed what the community felt was a hole in the fabric of their society: with the overwhelming support of the citizenry, they recruited an orchestra. The German Chamber Orchestra had been struggling for a dozen years in the competitive cultural environment of Frankfurt, so in 1992 the thirty-member ensemble moved to Bremen, altered its name, became involved with the city's school system, and started putting its adopted city on the cultural map. Through its tours, it also began



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gaining international exposure for its German corporate sponsors. During its current American tour, with Jaime Laredo on the podium, the orchestra will alight in New York to perform Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 3 (with Mr. Laredo doubling as soloist) and Grieg's "Holberg" Suite, as well as de Falla's "El Amor Brujo," featuring Spanish Gypsy singer Ginesa Ortega. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. Aug. 18 at 8:15. No tickets necessary.)

MOMA Summergarden—The final two weekends of this annual outdoor series (which this year explores American music composed between 1945 and 1970) focus on string instruments. Aug. 18-19: Cellist Darrett Adkins plays unaccompanied cello works by Gunther Schuller and Roger Sessions; pianist Ju-Ying Song joins him in sonatas by Hall Overton and Elliott Carter. . . . ¶ Aug. 25-26: String quartets by Conlon Nancarrow (his First), George Crumb (his "Black Angels," for an electrified quartet), and Carter (his Second), performed by a student ensemble from the Juilliard School. (Sculpture Garden, Museum of Modern Art, 14 W. 54th St. Evenings at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

Baroque in the Bronx—Aug. 20 at noon: Violinist Chin Kim and harpsichordist Rina Dokshitsky perform an all-Bach program. . . . ¶ Aug. 27 at noon: Flutist Marco Granados offers solo sonatas and trio sonatas by Bach and Telemann, assisted by violinist Shira Natif and harpsichordist Ilan Rechtman. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478.)

Bronx Arts Ensemble—Featuring clarinettist Paquito d'Rivera and soprano Brenda Feliciano in music by Latin-American composers. (Rockwood Drive Circle, Van Cortlandt Park, the Bronx. Aug. 20 at 2. . . . ¶ McGinley Center, Fordham University, Bronx Rose Hill Campus at Southern Blvd. Aug. 20 at 4.) . . . ¶ Music of Bach, with harpsichordist Edward Brewer. (Rockwood Drive Circle. Aug. 27 at 2. . . . ¶ McGinley Center. Aug. 27 at 4. No tickets necessary for any of these performances. For rain-date and other information, call 1-718 601-7399.)

Salon Soirées—While the summer-house crowd creeps through city-bound traffic jams, stay-at-home New Yorkers can bring their weekends to an elegant close in this second-story music room. Aug. 20: Violinist Chin Kim and pianist Rina Dokshitsky offer sonatas by Debussy and Beethoven (his Third). . . . ¶ Aug. 27: Movements from string trios by Beethoven. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Evenings at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra—Miriam Burns conducts Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 4 and his Violin Concerto (with Jorge Avila). (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. Aug. 22 at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Asian Youth Orchestra—Sergiu Comissiona leads the ensemble—a training orchestra for aspiring professionals aged fifteen to twenty-five—in Barber's Adagio for Strings, as well as Beethoven's "Egmont" Overture and Symphony No. 9. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Aug. 23 at 8.)

A. A. A.—If you see those initials and think "roadside assistance plan," your priorities are clearly not those of the American Accordionists' Association, whose members will descend on New York for a three-day extravaganza of workshops, master classes, and concerts. The convocation covers a broader array of topics than you might expect: "The Free Bass Accordion and How It Stimulates the Brain," "Do We Need New Compositions? (Art and Trash)," "Learning from Lawrence Welk," and "What Happened in 1958." (What *did* happen in 1958?) Accordion luminary William Schimmel oversees the proceedings, which include appearances by dancer-choreographer Micki Goodman, grunge composer Godfrey Nelson, and klezmer expert Paul Stein, among many others. Concerts will emphasize the music of Paul Creston and William Grant Still. (Tenri Cultural Institute, 575 Broadway. Aug. 25-27; activities begin each day at 3, with concerts at 7. For information, call 876-0827.)

OUT OF TOWN

Tanglewood—Aug. 16 at 8:30: The Deutsche *Kammerphilharmonie-Bremen (see above)*, conducted by Jaime Laredo, performs Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 3 (with Mr. Laredo doubling as soloist) and Grieg's "Holberg" Suite; Spanish Gypsy singer Ginesa Ortega is the soloist in de Falla's "El Amor Brujo." . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 8:30: Jeffrey Tate conducts the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Elgar's "Enigma" Variations and Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 1 (with John Browning). . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 8:30: Mr. Tate and the Boston Symphony offer an all-Haydn program: the "Armida" Overture, the Sinfonia Concertante in B-Flat Major (with soloists from the orchestra's first desks), the cantata "Berenice, che fai" (with soprano Lorraine Hunt), and the Symphony No. 104 (the "London"). . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 2:30: Keith Jarrett is the soloist in Mozart's A-Major Piano Concerto (K. 488), on a program that also includes Weber's "Der Freischütz" Overture and Philip Glass's Symphony No. 2. Dennis Russell Davies conducts the Boston Symphony. . . . ¶ Aug. 24 at 8:30: Pianist Andreas Haefliger performs Copland's "Piano Variations," Schubert's A-Major Sonata (D. 959), Debussy's "Images" (Book Two), and Liszt's "Après une Lecture de Dante." . . . ¶ Aug. 25 at 8:30: Christoph Eschenbach leads the Boston Symphony in Christopher Rouse's "Phaeton," Bruch's "Scottish Fantasy" (featuring violinist Gil Shaham), and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5. . . . ¶ Aug. 26 at 8:30: An all-Mendelssohn program touches down on his String Symphony No. 10, Violin Concerto (with Joshua Bell), and Symphony No. 4. Pinchas Zukerman leads the Boston Symphony. . . . ¶ Aug. 27 at 2:30:

Mitsuko Uchida, who will perform at Alice Tully Hall in November.

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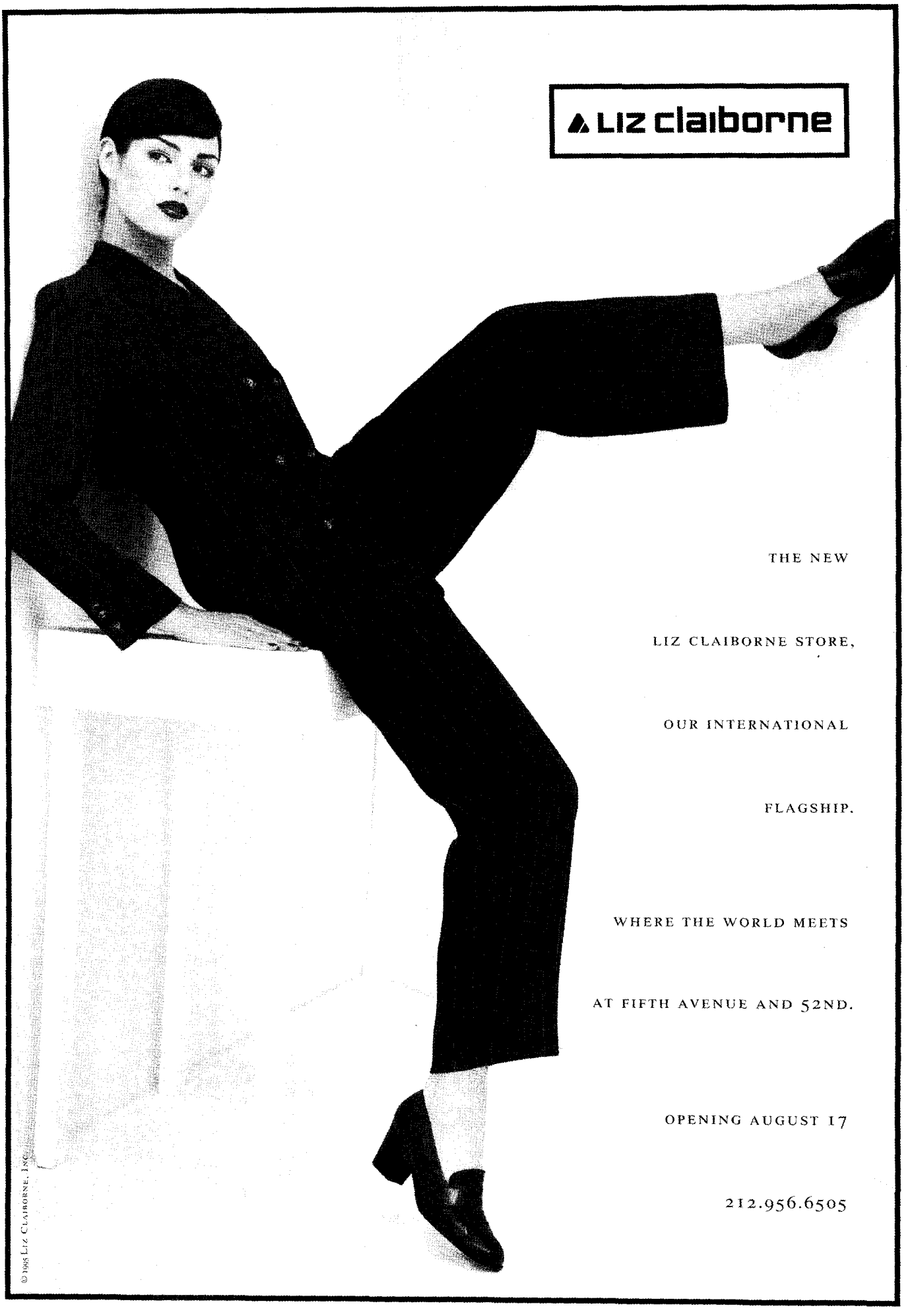

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Verdi's Requiem, performed by the Boston Symphony, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and soprano Sharon Sweet, mezzo-soprano Florence Quivar, a tenor to be announced, and bass Ferruccio Furlanetto. Mr. Eschenbach conducts. . . . ¶ Aug. 28 at 8:30: A pops concert, with John Williams leading the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra. (Lenox, Mass. 1-413 637-1600. Following these concerts, Tanglewood switches into a jazz mode for a week, before concluding on Sept. 4.)

Glimmerglass Opera—Final performances of the season. Aug. 17 at 8 and Aug. 20 at 2: Britten's "Paul Bunyan." . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 8: "Don Giovanni." . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 8 and Aug. 21 at 2: Handel's "Tamerlano." (Cooperstown, N.Y. 1-607 547-2255.)

Bridgehampton Chamber Music—Final concerts of the season. Aug. 17 at 8: Louise Farrenc's E-Minor Flute Trio, Dohnányi's C-Major String Trio, and Brahms's C-Minor Piano Quartet. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 6:30: An all-Beethoven program. . . . ¶ Aug. 22 at 8: A mostly-Baroque concert. . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 6: A children's concert. . . . ¶ Aug. 24 at 8: French chamber music. (Presbyterian Church, Montauk Highway, Bridgehampton, N.Y. For information about tickets, call 1-516 537-3507.)

Bard Music Festival—This year's festival, which is apparently the only American convocation to focus on Béla Bartók during the semicentennial of his death, concludes with a goulash of concerts, lectures, and round-tables. Aug. 18 at 8:30: The Muzsikás Folk Ensemble offers an evening of traditional Hungarian music. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 10 A.M.: Noted violinists discuss the evolution of violin technique in the twentieth century, punctuating their points with performances of Bartók's "Romanian Dances" and Rhapsody No. 1 (among other works). . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 2:30: A concert of violin-centered music composed by Bartók (including his Unaccompanied Sonata and Rhapsody No. 2) and his Hungarian contemporaries Leó Weiner and Zoltán Kodály. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 8:30: Leon Botstein conducts the American Symphony Orchestra in a program of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Hungarian music: Ferenc Erkel's "Festive Overture," Dohnányi's Konzertstück (Op. 12, with cellist Bion Tsang), Kodály's "Summer Evening," and Bartók's Four Pieces for Orchestra (Op. 12) and "Cantata Profana" (with tenor Glenn Siebert, bass-baritone Tamás Szüle, and the William Appling Singers). . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 10 A.M.: Panelists consider the influence of folk music on classical composition. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 1:30: A program of Bartók's folk-inspired works, including choral selections and his String Quartet No. 3. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 5: Mr. Botstein leads the American Symphony Orchestra in Bartók's "The Miraculous Mandarin" and a concert version of "Bluebeard's Castle" (featuring soprano Veronika Kincses and Mr. Szüle). (Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. 1-914 758-3226. Lectures begin a half hour before all concerts.)

Music Mountain—Aug. 20 at 3: The Cassatt String Quartet plays quartets by Beethoven (in C Minor, Op. 18, No. 4) and Borodin (his Second), as well as Dvořák's Piano Quartet in E-Flat Major (with Randall Hodgkinson assisting). . . . ¶ Aug. 26 at 8: Igor Kipnis performs fortepiano works by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. . . . ¶ Aug. 27 at 3: The Shanghai String Quartet and violist Jesse Levine offer Brahms's F-Major String Quintet; unassisted, the foursome plays Brahms's C-Minor Quartet and Mozart's B-Flat-Major Quartet (K. 589). (Falls Village, Conn. For information about tickets, call 1-203 824-7126. The season continues through Sept. 3.)

Maverick Concerts—Aug. 20 at 8: Trios by Arensky, Vivaldi, and Rachmaninoff, played by the Eroica Trio. . . . ¶ Aug. 26 at 11 A.M.: A free children's concert. . . . ¶ Aug. 27 at 8: The Cassatt String Quartet plays quartets by Mendelssohn (in D Major, Op. 44, No. 1), Beethoven (in C Minor, Op. 18, No. 4), and Borodin (his Second). (Woodstock, N.Y. 1-914 679-8217. The season continues through Sept. 3.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Flowering Pharmaceuticals—At the New York Botanical Garden, the blooms in the meadow of the two-and-a-half-acre native-plant garden are at their peak. Ethnobotanist Suzan Donleavy-Johnston will seek out the area's medicinals—e.g., oak (whose extracts are used for disinfecting burns and cuts), wintergreen (whose leaves smell like Ben-Gay and are, in fact, helpful for muscular aches and pains), and joe-pye weed (a panacea reportedly named for the Native American healer who looked after both Indians and Massachusetts settlers). (Bronx Park. Aug. 19-20, at noon and 2. For a schedule of other events, call 1-718 817-8700.)

The Horsey Set—The Hampton Classic gets off the ground on Sunday, Aug. 27, with seven local championship competitions for hunter and show-jumper horses and their riders. Equestrian events continue through the week in the five show rings on the Bridgehampton grounds, culminating, on Sept. 3, in the Crown Royal Grand Prix, in which the top thirty-five riders and their mounts negotiate the jumps and hazards against the clock. (Snake Hollow Rd., off Route 27, Bridgehampton, N.Y. 1-516 537-3177. Daily, except Monday, from 8:30 to 5.)

Readings—Aug. 23 at 7:30: Xavier Cavallos, Hill Cato, Poppy, and Christian Williams return from the national poetry slam in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to read from their work. (Nuyorican Poets Café, 236 E. 3rd St. 674-3778.) . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 8: Winston Groom, who is taking his long-running creation around the country, reads from "Gump & Co.," the sequel, in his only New York appearance. (Barnes & Noble, Broadway at 82nd St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 6:30: George Plimpton introduces novelist Francine Prose and poets John Ashbery and Thomas M. Disch, who will read from their work. (Barnes & Noble, Third Ave. at 54th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Aug. 24 at 7: Louise Blum reads from her latest novel, "Amnesty." (A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Aug. 29 at 7: Rick Moody reads from his collection of short stories "The Ring of Brightest Angels Around Heaven." (Verso Books, 128 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. No tickets necessary.)

Talks—Aug. 18 at 8: Architect Robert Chin applies the principles of *fêng-shui*, the Chinese art of harmonious placement, to landscape gardening. (Open Center, 83 Spring St. 219-2527. Tickets at the door on the evening of the talk.) . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 7: The New York Film Salon goes on location, in the parlor of a Brooklyn Heights brownstone, for a discussion of "Smoke," the current Wayne Wang-Paul Auster release featuring Harvey Keitel as a smoke-shop owner and William Hurt as a writer. (122 Pierrepont St. For more information, call 1-914 242-0919.) . . . ¶ Aug. 26 at noon and 2: Art historian Allison Merrill looks at several objects in the Cloisters' collection, including a birchwood sculpture of the Virgin and Child and a stained-glass panel depicting a saint's legend, using them as points of departure in an exploration of medieval aesthetics, and of the devotion to beauty of this putatively austere age. (Fort Tryon Park. No charge beyond museum admission.)

Tours—Aug. 19-20 and Aug. 26 at 4: As part of the Panasonic Village Jazz Festival, Allison Dubin checks out a medley of downtown *boîtes* (the Village Vanguard, the Blue Note, Sweet Basil, et al.) in the light of day. For more information, call 353-0334. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at noon: Literary historian Francis Morrone footnotes the Madison Square and Gramercy Park neighborhoods, in a tour of sites from the life and work of such New York novelists as Herman Melville, Henry James, and Edith Wharton. For more information, call 606-3893. . . . ¶ Aug. 27 at 2: Alfred Pommer, of Cultural Walking Tours, strolls past the monuments and grand residences of Central Park South. For more information, call 979-2388.

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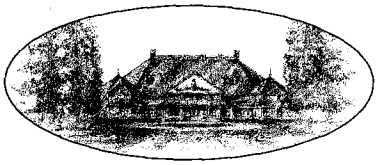

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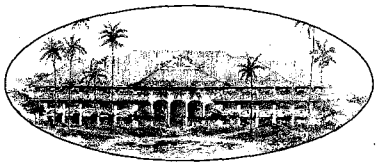

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THE MOVIES

Coming Attractions

RUN your eye down a list of pictures due for release this fall, and the questions jump out at you: Will Spike Lee's "Clockers" be any good? Do we have to see the new Paul Verhoeven shocker, "Showgirls?" Can Linda Fiorentino top her fence-rattling scene from "The Last Seduction" in her new thriller, "Jade"? And what about Demi Moore, in "The Scarlet Letter"—where will she stick that big red "A"?

Beginning with Moore as Hester Prynne, addicts of freaky casting can look forward to a fulfilling season. The title role in Oliver Stone's "Nixon" has gone to Anthony Hopkins, who needs to do something fairly traumatic with his jowls if credibility is to remain intact. This could be one of his richest parts (think Hannibal Lecter with looser morals), and he should certainly square up nicely against Michael Douglas in Rob Reiner's "The American President." (Note that plain, no-strings titles are coming back into fashion. Directors don't mess around these days; soon we'll be watching movies called "Lots of Explosions" and "Really Boring." When Martin Scorsese sets his new Robert De Niro film in a casino, he names it "Casino"; when Richard Donner makes a Sylvester Stallone vehicle called "Assassins," we all know that it's not about the Bloomsbury group. The most evocative of these titles belongs to the Arnold Schwarzenegger movie slated for next year, "The Eraser," in which Arnie presumably goes around rubbing out kids' homework.)

The good news is that somebody besides Demi Moore is reaching for the bookshelf. A bunch of adaptations are on the way, and they deserve to be dealt with in order of ascending literary merit. First, Jane Austen: "Sense and Sensibility" has been filmed by Ang Lee, the director of "The Wedding Banquet," who could be an inspired choice. Second, Shakespeare: Ian McKellen drags his hump in Olivier's tracks for a new "Richard III," while Laurence Fishburne, who a couple of years ago played Ike Turner, takes on the part of another rotten husband, in "Othello." Top of the list, Elmore Leonard: many have tried to reproduce his rhythms on the screen, and all have failed. If anyone can do it, John Travolta can; he stars in Barry Sonnenfeld's film version of "Get Shorty."

What will slay 'em in their seats over the coming months? It could be Barbet Schroeder's "Before and After" (with Meryl Streep and Liam Neeson), or Zhang Yimou's "Shanghai Triad" (with Gong Li), or Michael Mann's "Heat" (with De Niro and Al Pacino), or Stephen Frears' "Mary Reilly" (with Julia Roberts as Dr. Jekyll's housekeeper). But though these could all be interesting movies, there's no guarantee, in the age of "Batman Forever," that they will score. Whereas an animated feature called "Toy Story," with voices by Tom Hanks and Tim Allen—now *that* sounds like a hit.—ANTHONY LANE

FILMS OPENING

THE AMAZING PANDA ADVENTURE—In China, a ten-year-old American boy (Ryan Slater), his naturalist father (Stephen Lang), a young girl (Yi Ding), and an old man (Wang Fei) set out to save a panda trapped by poachers. Directed by Christopher Cain. Written by Jeff Rothberg and Laurice Elehwany. Opening August 25.

ARABIAN KNIGHT—An animated feature about a cobbler, a thief, and a princess, with voices supplied by Matthew Broderick, Jonathan Winters, and Jennifer Beals. Directed by Richard Williams, who co-wrote the script with Margaret French. Opening August 25.

THE BABY-SITTERS CLUB—Reviewed below in Current Films.

BEYOND RANGOON—Patricia Arquette stars as a woman who joins the pro-democracy movement in Burma, in a film directed by John Boorman. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) Opening August 25.

BRIAN WILSON: I JUST WASN'T MADE FOR THESE TIMES—A documentary, by the musician Don Was, about the troubled, talented leader of the Beach Boys. August 16-29. (Film Forum.)

DEAD FUNNY—A comedy about a New Yorker (Elizabeth Peña) who discovers the corpse of her boyfriend (Andrew McCarthy) in her kitchen. Also with Paige Turco. Written and directed by John Feldman. Opening August 23. (Village East Cinemas.)

DESPERADO—Robert Rodriguez' sequel to his 1993 "El Mariachi," with Antonio Banderas as the mariachi without a name. Opening August 25.

DR. JEKYLL AND MS. HYDE—Tim Daly and Sean Young star in David Price's gender-bending update of Robert Louis Stevenson's tale. With Lysette Anthony, Stephen Tobolowsky, Harvey Fierstein, and Jeremy Piven. Written by Tim John, Oliver Butcher, William Davies, and William Osborne. Opening August 25.

HYENAS—A satire by the Senegalese director Djibril Diop Mambety, about a wealthy old woman (Ami Diakhate) who returns to the village of her youth. In Wolof. Opening August 18. (Little Theatre.)

JUPITER'S WIFE—Reviewed below in Current Films.

LORD OF ILLUSIONS—The newest horror film written and directed by Clive Barker follows a New York City detective (Scott Bakula) on the trail of a celebrated magician (Kevin J. O'Connor). With Famke Janssen and Daniel Von Bargen. Opening August 25.

MORTAL KOMBAT—A martial-arts-cum-science-fiction thriller based on the video game of

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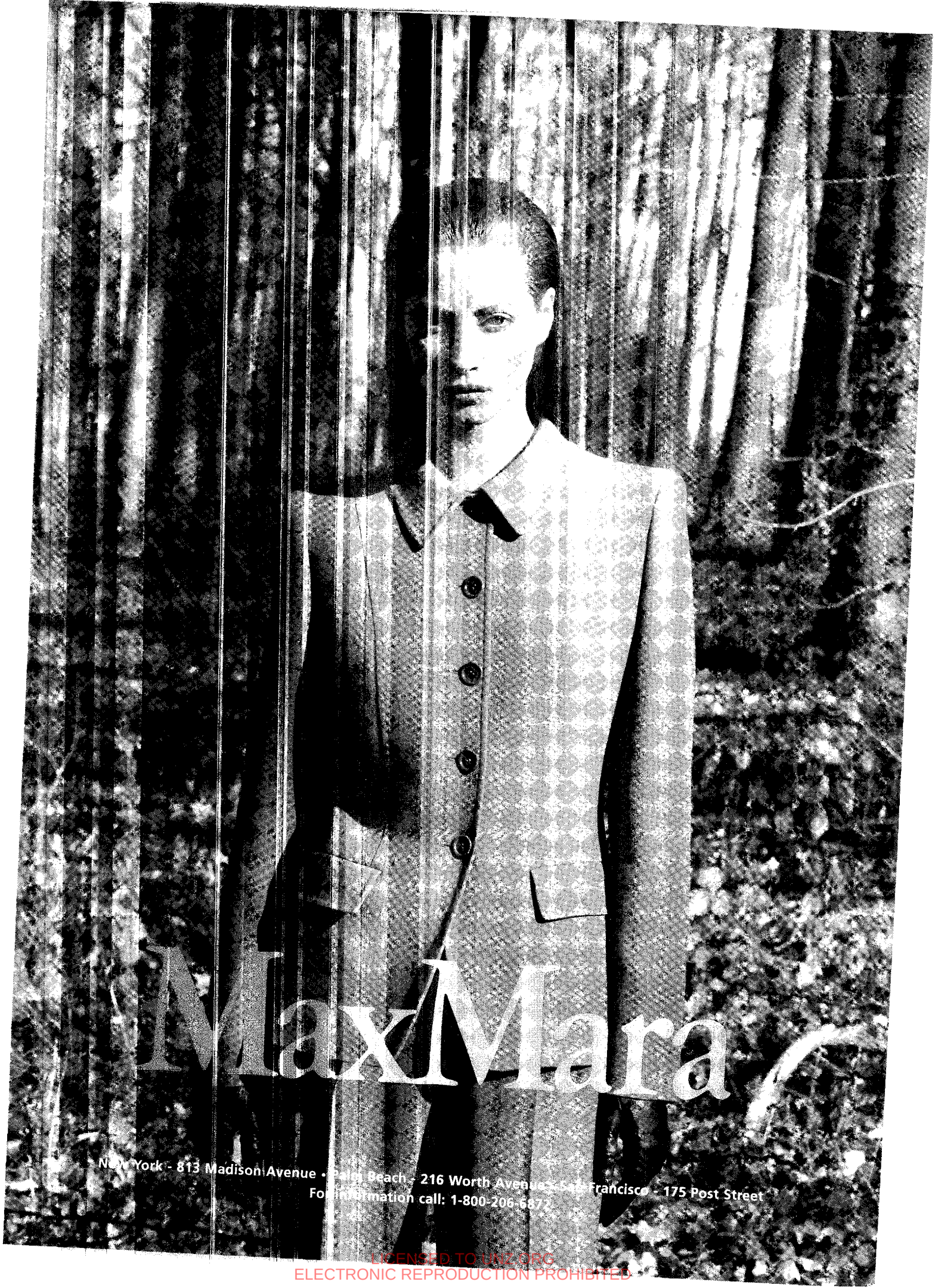

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the same name. Directed by Paul Anderson. Written by Kevin Droney. Opening August 18. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, Orpheum VII, and Criterion Center.)

Nadja—An independent feature, filmed in black and white, about a sexy vampire (Elina Löwensohn) and her twin brother (Jared Harris) in downtown Manhattan. With Peter Fonda, Martin Donovan, Galaxy Craze, and Suzy Amis. Written and directed by Michael Almereyda. Opening August 25. (Angelika Film Center.)

The Show—A documentary about hip-hop music, featuring concert footage of Craig Mack, Dr. Dre, Naughty by Nature, Run DMC, and other acts. Directed by Brian Robbins. Opening August 25.

The Tie That Binds—Daryl Hannah and Keith Carradine play criminals out to reclaim the six-year-old daughter they have given up for adoption, in a thriller written by Michael Auerbach and directed by Wesley Strick. With Vincent Spano and Moira Kelly as the unlucky new parents. Opening August 25.

The Usual Suspects—Reviewed below in Current Films.

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre addresses and phone numbers are listed on page 48.)

Apollo 13—Ron Howard's movie, like the perilous 1970 lunar mission itself, gets home safely only by the skin of its teeth. Dean Cundey's cinematography is drab, James Horner's score is unbearable, and Howard retards the momentum with frequent cutaways to the astronauts' families, who are, unsurprisingly, mighty worried. But the acting—especially by Tom Hanks, Kevin Bacon, and Bill Paxton (as the astronauts) and Ed Harris (as a NASA flight controller)—is sharp and persuasive. And the screenplay, by William Broyles, Jr., and Al Reinert, makes the scientific details both comprehensible and exciting. In the end, this failed mission seems like the most impressive achievement of the entire space program: a triumph not of planning but of inspired improvisation.—T.R. (7/10/95) (34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Regency.)

An Awfully Big Adventure—In Mike Newell's new picture, a teen-ager (Georgina Cates) who goes to work at the Liverpool Playhouse in 1947 falls for a sleazy director (Hugh Grant)—an unfortunate choice, since his hobby is the capture of male hearts. She has better luck with the louche leading man (Alan Rickman). Charles Wood's screenplay, adapted from Beryl Bainbridge's 1991 novel, deals in muttered non sequiturs, and the movie feels as if someone tore it apart and couldn't glue it back together again. Yet it works as a minor mood piece—there's real texture to it.—A.L. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex and Cinema 3.)

Babe—The animal actors have human voices in Chris Noonan and George Miller's adaptation of Dick King-Smith's 1985 children's book, in which an intrepid pig competes for the world sheepdog championship. Directed by Noonan. (Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, 86th Street East Twin, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

The Baby-sitters Club—As a way of making money and hanging out together at the same time, twelve-year-old Kristy (played by Sissy Spacek's daughter, Schuyler Fisk—a tomboyish natural) and her friends set up a summer day camp. Girls don't goad each other into foolhardy acts of bravery or beat each other up the way boys do, so rather than building to a climax the movie remains loose and episodic. But it captures the sweet period just before girls cede their personalities to clothes envy and other terrors of adolescence, and like its main characters it is both commercially shrewd and appealingly square. With Ellen Burstyn as a neighbor and Peter Horton as Kristy's deadbeat father, whose sudden reappearance teaches her a lesson in responsibility. Written by Dalene Young, drawing on the series of preteen books by Ann M. Martin; directed, with considerable warmth (if not much flair), by Melanie Mayron, who played Melissa on "thirtysomething."—S.K. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex and Criterion Center; starting Aug. 18.)

The Brothers McMullen—A romantic comedy about three Irish-American siblings (Jack Mulcahy, Mike McGlone, and Edward Burns) who are reunited upon the death of their father. Written and directed by Burns. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Square.)

Bushwhacked—A comedy about a rube (Daniel Stern) who, while trying to clear his name of murder charges, becomes the leader of a troop of scouts in the wilderness. Directed by Greg Beeman. Written by John Jordan, Danny Byers, Tommy Swerdlow, and Michael Goldberg. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 59th Street East Cinema, Orpheum VII, 23rd St. West Triplex, Lincoln Square, and National Twin.)

Clueless—The Beverly Hills high school in writer-director Amy Heckerling's comedy (based loosely on Jane Austen's "Emma") is a world of cellular phones, nose jobs, and fast, funny mall-speak, where all the girls love sexy makeovers and all the boys are beautiful young pups. Alicia Silverstone plays a matchmaking high-school queen named Cher who is so naïvely confident that she doesn't see how manipulative her behavior is. With its charming performances, bubblegum colors, and intentionally funny product placements, the movie is like a kiss in a candy store—silly and sweet.—B.D. (19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Waverly, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, and Embassy.)

Crumb—Terry Zwigoff's brilliant, scary documentary about the underground-comics artist R. Crumb. While the film is reviewing Crumb's career, from its psychedelic-era heyday to the present, and following him as he goes about his everyday activities, it's also telling a harrowing story about his damaged family. The movie is often funny, but what makes it extraordinary is that it explores, without presuming to explain, the sources of a unique and savage comic sensibility. And it shows us that Crumb's gift—the detachment that allows him to create such hilariously contemptuous images of the world around him (and inside him)—is also a kind of curse, or, at least, a nasty habit.—T.R. (5/1/95) (Film Forum 3.)

Dangerous Minds—Michelle Pfeiffer stars as an English teacher in a tough inner-city high school. Directed by John N. Smith. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1.)

Double Happiness—Jade (Sandra Oh), a self-confident twenty-two-year-old who lives with her parents, wants to be an actress; her overprotective parents, who are emigrants from Hong Kong, want her to marry a nice Chinese boy. The movie is billed as a comedy, but it's much more interesting for the repressive family dynamic it captures. Stephen Chang is excellent as the father. Written and directed by Mina Shum.—S.K. (Eastside Playhouse and Quad Cinema.)

I Can't Sleep—A thriller set in Paris, about an aspiring Lithuanian actress (Katerina Golubeva), a musician from the Antilles (Alex Descas), his drag-queen brother (Richard Courcet), and the elderly residents of a hotel, who are being preyed on by a serial killer. Directed by Claire Denis, who co-wrote the screenplay with Jean-Pol Fargeau. In French. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

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The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love—The title characters—two high-school seniors, a tomboy outcast (Laurel Hollomon) and a popular girl who has yet to come out (Nicole Parker)—are charming, in a modest, indie-movie sort of way. But this is basically a puppy-love story rewritten for girls: admirably unsensational, earnest, and engaging, in the tradition of an after-school special. Written and directed by Maria Maggenti.—S.K. (Angelika Film Center.)

Jeffrey—The title character in Paul Rudnick's adaptation of his 1993 Off Broadway comedy is a gay New Yorker (Steven Weber) who decides to swear off sex. With Patrick Stewart, Michael T. Weiss, Bryan Batt, Sigourney Weaver, Christine Baranski, Nathan Lane, and Olympia Dukakis. Christopher Ashley directed. (Cinema II, Quad Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

Jupiter's Wife—It's easy to understand why Michel Negroponte was elated when, while aimlessly shooting footage in Central Park, he happened upon Maggie, the homeless woman who became the focus of this documentary. Maggie is fascinating: she's full of Park lore, she hears mysterious voices, and she claims to be the lost daughter of Robert Ryan. The demands of this intrusive genre are high, though, and Negroponte's observations are too bland to measure up to them. In the end, peering into this life turned out to be a better opportunity for him than it was for the audience—not to mention Maggie.—S.K. (Quad Cinema; starting Aug. 18.)

A Kid in King Arthur's Court—A California boy (Thomas Ian Nicholas) lands in Camelot, in an adventure-comedy also starring Joss Ackland as King Arthur and Ron Moody as Merlin. Directed by Michael Gottlieb. Written by Michael Part and Robert L. Levy. (Village East Cinemas, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Guild, Lincoln Square, and Olympia.)

Kids—Larry Clark's film follows some New York City teen-agers through a day and a night of largely self-destructive activity; these kids seem to be wandering in total darkness. Although the movie will undoubtedly be received as a wake-up call, a sobering report on a lost generation, what's fascinating—and unsettling—about it is Clark's unmistakable admiration for the recklessness of the young. The obsessive, ardent gaze he turns on his subjects as they stumble toward oblivion has a strangely aestheticizing effect; he can't help turning these wasted, aimless kids into icons of the beautiful and damned. Screenplay by Harmony Korine (who was nineteen when he wrote it).—T.R. (7/31/95) (Angelika Film Center, 19th Street East 6, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

A Little Princess—Alfonso Cuarón's film, based on a novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett, is one of the rare children's movies that don't merely pay lip service to the imagination but actually use it. The script presents the battle of youthful fancy against adult "realism" as a kind of epic struggle; the antagonists are Sara Crewe (Liesel Matthews), a bright, happy, exuberantly creative girl, and Miss Minchin (Eleanor Bron), a boarding-school headmistress who is a ruthless downsizer of her pupils' imaginations. The message, spoken by Sara, is "*All* girls are little princesses," and, although that may sound a bit sticky, this funny, lively, stirring movie makes us believe it.—T.R. (5/29/95) (Lincoln Square.)

Living in Oblivion—Tom DiCillo's comedy is slight but smart, and it doesn't overstay its welcome. Steve Buscemi plays a harassed director trying to make a low-budget picture in New York, who suffers a plague of glitches that range from sour milk in the crew's coffee to an angry dwarf. It's the ideal part for Buscemi: pallid, ratty, and pop-eyed, he has the air of a man who is deeply in love with movies and wishes he weren't.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

The Net—Irwin Winkler's cyber-thriller shuffles morosely from action sequence to action sequence, like a long bus trip with multiple transfers. Sandra Bullock (who drove the bus in "Speed") plays a computer whiz who stumbles on evidence of a sinister conspiracy; she's pretty and likable, but this wan chase picture needs a lot more than she can give it. The screenplay, by John Brancato and Michael Ferris, is remarkably free of ingenuity, and therefore of suspense. It's unlikely that the movie's intended audience—computer-savvy viewers addicted to the speed and versatility of their machines—will be impressed by a thriller that unfolds at the deliberate pace of a "Matlock" episode. With Jeremy Northam and Dennis Miller.—T.R. (8/7/95) (Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, Gemini, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Nine Months—Samuel (Hugh Grant), a child psychotherapist who doesn't like children, is aghast when he discovers that his girlfriend (Julianne Moore) is pregnant; they have just enough time to argue, split up, and bond again before the baby is born. The film's energy, such as it is, arises from Grant's patter with other men (an aggressive Tom Arnold, a lazily horny Jeff Goldblum). The women—Moore and Joan Cusack—are little more than magnets for male anxiety. They have the babies, the movie tells us with its sunny, reactionary guile; what more do they want? Directed by Chris Columbus.—A.L. (7/24/95) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 23rd St. West Triplex, 62nd & Broadway, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Gotham Cinema; through Aug. 17.)

Pocahontas—Disney may have seen lightning strike for the fifth consecutive time with this animated smash, but it's the weakest of the bunch: a bland, predictably p.c. story so taken up with teaching lessons about tolerance and the environment that it leaves hardly any room for laughter. The studio hasn't failed in its intentions—the merchandise will outgross the movie by a wide margin—but there are more entertaining commercials on TV.—B.D. (Village East Cinemas, Olympia, and Embassy.)

The Postman—Antonio Skármeta's bittersweet 1985 novel, "Burning Patience," upon which this movie is loosely based, told the story of Mario, a lonely postman who delivers mail to Pablo Neruda in Isla Negra, the desolate corner of Chile where the poet spent his final years. In Michael Radford's lovely but sanitized version, the action has been moved two decades earlier to picturesque Italy. As Neruda, the great Philippe Noiret somehow conquers being dubbed in Spanish-accented Italian; as Mario, the late Italian comedian Massimo Troisi is painfully affecting. In Italian.—S.K. (Village East Cinemas, Cinema 3rd Avenue, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Safe—Carol (Julianne Moore), the heroine of Todd Haynes's peculiar, daring new movie, is a wealthy Southern California housewife stricken with a mysterious disease. The best diagnosis anyone can come up with is "environmental illness"—which means, essentially, that she's allergic to the world she lives in. The movie's rhythm is hypnotic, and when, midway, the action shifts to a New Age desert compound that represents Carol's last hope of restoring her health, the filmmaker's distancing techniques begin to

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pay off in volatile, eccentric satire. Moore, in a nearly unplayable role, is amazingly vivid and touching; this is a heartbreaking portrait of a woman in full, panicked retreat from life.—T.R. (Village East Cinemas and Angelika 57.)

Smoke—Five years ago, the director Wayne Wang asked the novelist Paul Auster to work up one of his stories as a screenplay. The result—a highly cerebral intertwining of the lives of white and black characters in Brooklyn in 1990, centering on a cigar-store owner (Harvey Keitel) and a lonely writer (William Hurt)—is obviously a labor of love. But Wang's sentimentality and Auster's self-consciousness don't go together: the direction is literal, and the lines sound like short-story dialogue read aloud. Only Forest Whitaker, playing a guilty father, comes off well. A gorgeous sequence that runs behind the final credits—with no dialogue, just a song by Tom Waits—suggests what the film *might* have been. With Harold Perrineau, Jr., Stockard Channing, and Ashley Judd.—S.K. (Angelika Film Center, Sutton, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Something to Talk About—Julia Roberts stars as a Southern housewife who discovers that her husband (Dennis Quaid) is having an affair. With Robert Duvall, Gena Rowlands, Kyra Sedgwick, and Haley Aull. Directed by Lasse Hallstrom. Written by Callie Khouri. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

Species—In Los Angeles, where no one can hear you scream, a comely young blonde (Natasha Henstridge)—who is, in fact, half human and half extraterrestrial—roams the streets in search of a man to mate with. Hard on her heels are five alien-hunters (Ben Kingsley, Forest Whitaker, Michael Madsen, Marg Helgenberger, and Alfred Molina), who intend to destroy the Babe from Another Planet before she can have unsafe sex and drop a litter of nasty mutants. Roger Donaldson's film splices together bits from vampire stories, the "Alien" series, and the 1987 B picture "The Hidden," and the result is pretty unsightly—it doesn't make sense, it isn't funny, and it isn't scary.—T.R. (Village East Cinemas, 59th Street East Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, Lincoln Square, and Embassy.)

Under Siege 2: Dark Territory—Steven Seagal returns, this time as a passenger on a cross-country train seized by terrorists who plan to blow up the Pentagon. Eric Bogosian is the lead bomber. Directed by Geoff Murphy. (Village East Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Criterion Center.)

Unzipped—A witty and fascinating look at the fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi during the months leading up to his fall, 1994, show. Director Douglas Keeve and editor Paula Heredia capture the absurd amount of work that goes into the twenty-minute unveiling of a collection that consists largely of pink and orange fake furs. But Mizrahi—warm if occasionally dictatorial, compulsively curious, and a sponge for popular culture, from "Nanook of the North" to "The Mary Tyler Moore Show"—plays to the camera like a natural star. It's nice to see a behind-the-scenes documentary that isn't just out to expose warts. The movie isn't close to objective, though: it was co-produced by Nina Santisi, the vice president of Mizrahi, Inc., and Keeve and Mizrahi were having an affair when it was being shot. With Naomi Campbell, Cindy Crawford, Kate Moss, and other very familiar faces.—S.K. (Village Theatre VII and Lincoln Square.)

The Usual Suspects—New York City police are investigating a robbery; a detective (Chazz Palminteri) pulls in five suspects (Kevin Pollak, Stephen Baldwin, Gabriel Byrne, Benicio Del Torro, and Kevin Spacey), and during the long hours in a holding cell the five get acquainted and plan *another* robbery. There are three main bursts of activity—a jewel heist, a shooting in an underground parking lot, and an exploding boat—but the movie's chief business is the trading of lies, rumors, and threats. Director Bryan Singer drives his characters toward doom, and the spinning out of that damnation feels like fun. Christopher McQuarrie's script stays one step ahead of us, or so we believe; in the closing minutes, it becomes clear that we have in fact been trailing ten miles behind.—A.L. (8/14/95) (Lincoln Square; starting Aug. 16.)

Virtuosity—A thriller set in 1999, starring Denzel Washington as a retired Los Angeles police officer who returns to the force to capture a computer-generated criminal (Russell Crowe). With Kelly Lynch, Stephen Spinella, William Forsythe, and Louise Fletcher. Directed by Brett Leonard. Written by Eric Bernt. (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

A Walk in the Clouds—Keanu Reeves plays a Second World War veteran who agrees to pose as the husband of a California vineyard owner's daughter (Aitana Sanchez-Gijon) when he learns that she is pregnant. With Giancarlo Giannini and Anthony Quinn. Directed by Alfonso Arau ("Like Water for Chocolate"). Written by Robert Mark Kamen, Mark Miller, and Harvey Weitzman. (Beekman, East 85th Street, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Waterworld—Kevin Costner plays the Mariner—part man, part fish, and the unofficial Prince of Mutants—in a post-apocalyptic action picture of the "Mad Max" type. Lurking beneath its conventional adventure-movie surface is a bizarre environmental parable, in which Costner's rugged, ecologically correct loner battles a scurvy bunch of pirates called Smokers, who smoke cigarettes, drink Jack Daniel's, and burn fossil fuels. None of the filmmakers appear to have realized that spending a fortune to make a picture that condemns excessive consumption and preaches the wise use of resources might seem a bit disingenuous. What's really propelling the movie is the vanity of its star (who is also one of the producers); at the end, Costner gives himself the most florid and protracted action-hero apotheosis since the conclusion of "Shane." With Jeanne Tripplehorn, Tina Majorino, and Dennis Hopper. Directed by Kevin Reynolds, from a screenplay credited to Peter Rader and David Twohy.—T.R. (8/7/95) (Village Theatre VII, 34th St. East, Baronet, Coronet, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Wild Reeds—André Téchiné's coming-of-age drama, set in a quiet provincial town in 1962, is the best French film in years. The young characters are all deeply confused about their political, intellectual, and sexual identities; the director sets up their conflicts with masterly ease, and, using smooth, complex tracking shots, carries them toward resolutions that are tentative but real. The movie flows like a river. Few pictures dealing with teen-agers have been so accurate about the moral and emotional urgency of adolescents' attempts to understand their lives, or so forgiving of their failures. Gaël Morel, Élodie Bouchez, Stéphane Rideau, and Frédéric Gorny play the main characters, and they're all terrific. In French.—T.R. (7/31/95) (Quad Cinema.)

Wings of Courage—The first feature film to be made in Imax 3-D has to be watched through a special headset (satisfyingly chunky) and lasts forty minutes (gratifyingly short). Craig Sheffer plays a pilot in 1930 hired to fly mail across the Andes while his wife (Elizabeth McGovern) sits at home feeling worried. Instead of rethinking the shape of the drama to suit the format, the director, Jean-Jacques Annaud, has taken a small, simplistic plot, filled a couple of lonely roles with flat performers, and marooned them in the midst of a spectacle that is not so much a movie as a demonstration. With Val Kilmer and Tom Hulce.—A.L. (4/24/95) (Lincoln Square.)

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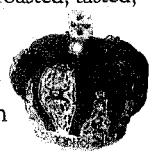

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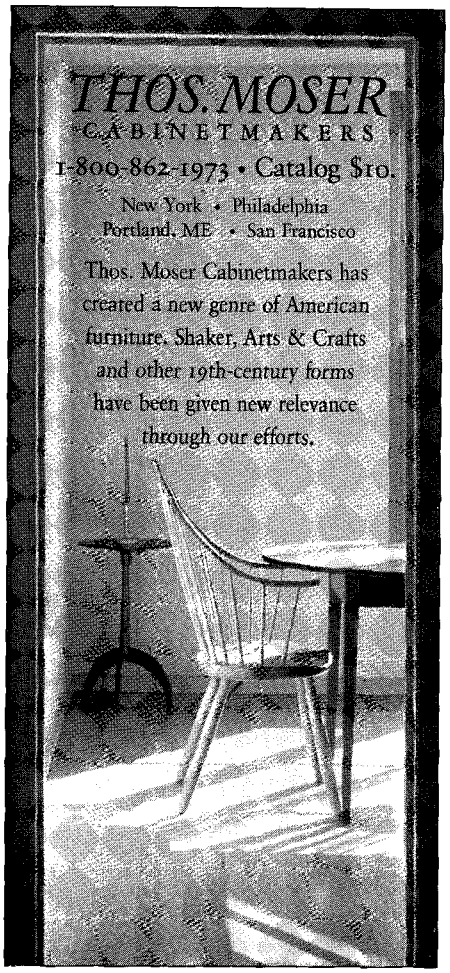

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BATMAN FOREVER (reviewed in our issue of 7/10/95): Gemini and Criterion Center. . . . **THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY** (6/19/95): Tower East. . . . **BURNT BY THE SUN** (5/8/95): Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . . **COUNTRY LIFE:** 68th St. Playhouse. . . . **DON JUAN DE MARCO** (4/10/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **FIRST KNIGHT** (7/17/95): First & 62nd Cinemas. . . . **FORGET PARIS** (5/29/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **FREE WILLY 2: THE ADVENTURE HOME:** Lincoln Square. . . . **FRENCH KISS** (5/29/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **LIE DOWN WITH DOGS:** Village East Cinemas. . . . **LITTLE ODESSA:** Plaza. . . . **MURIEL'S WEDDING:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **PRIEST** (3/27/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **PULP FICTION** (10/10/94): Movieland 8th Street Triplex. . . . **RIVER OF GRASS:** Little Theatre. . . . **ROB ROY** (4/17/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **SHE LIVES TO RIDE:** Little Theatre.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

EAST SIDE

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000).
LITTLE THEATRE, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171).
MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th (477-6600).
VILLAGE THEATRE VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th (982-0400).
CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th (924-3363).
VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, 2nd Ave. at 12th (529-6799).
19TH STREET EAST 6, B'way at 19th (260-8000).
MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th (689-6548).
34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th (532-5544).
34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th (683-0255).
EASTSIDE PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 55th (755-3020).
SUTTON 1 AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th (759-1411).
GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th (759-2262).
PLAZA, 42 E. 58th (355-3320).
MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th (935-6420).
59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th (759-4630).
BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th (355-1663).
CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, 3rd Ave. at 60th (753-6022).
FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd (513-5408).
GEMINI 1 AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th (832-1670).
BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th (737-2622).
NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th (744-7339).
68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th (734-0302).
TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st (879-1313).
EAST 85TH STREET, 1st Ave. at 85th (249-5100).
PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th (534-1880).
ORPHEUM VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th (876-2400).
86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th (249-1144).

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110).
WAVERLY 1 AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd (929-8037).
ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th (929-3350).
QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th (255-8800).
CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd (513-5402).
23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd (989-0060).
GUILD, 33 W. 50th (757-2406).
WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St., between 8th and 9th Aves. (504-0960).
ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th (765-7600).
CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th (265-2520).
ANGELIKA 57, 225 W. 57th (586-1900).
PARIS, 4 W. 58th (980-5656).
CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th (752-5959).
62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd (265-7466).
LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, B'way at 63rd (757-2280).
REGENCY, B'way at 67th (724-3700).
LINCOLN SQUARE, B'way at 68th (336-5000).
84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th (877-3600).
METRO CINEMA 1 AND 2, B'way at 99th (222-1200).
OLYMPIA 1 AND II, B'way at 107th (865-8128).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th (354-0900).
EMBASSY 1, B'way at 46th (302-0494).
EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th (730-7262).
ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way (869-8340).
NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th (869-0950).

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

ALL THE WAY HOME (1963)—This adaptation of the Tad Mosel play, based on James Agee's semi-autobiographical novel "A Death in the Family," is terribly earnest, pictorial, and well-intentioned. And a terrible mistake. Robert Preston had been a favorite actor of Agee's, but he's clearly in the wrong age bracket to play a young married man, and even the lovely Jean Simmons can't do anything to save her role as his wife, who soon becomes his widow. Michael Kearney is extremely unengaging as the bereaved child. Directed by Alex Segal.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Aug. 24.)

AT THE CIRCUS (1939)—The Marx Brothers. They do get to shoot Margaret Dumont out of a cannon, but it's all fairly ponderous. Edward Buzzell directed, from Irving Brecher's weary script. The music is by Harold Arlen; Groucho sings the famous ditty about "Lydia, the Tattooed Lady."—P.K. (Walter Reade Theatre; Aug. 26-27.)

THE AWFUL TRUTH (1937)—A classic screwball comedy, about one of old Hollywood's favorite subjects: the divorced couple who almost bed down with new mates but get back together. Irene Dunne and Cary Grant are the sparring partners, and Ralph Bellamy plays just about the same role he later played in "His Girl Friday." Irene Dunne's way with a quip is to smile brightly and wring it dry, but she's at her best here. Leo McCarey's direction is first-rate.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Aug. 22 and Aug. 29.)

BELLE DE JOUR (1967)—Luis Buñuel was in his late sixties when he made this icy, bracingly unwholesome film about the secret life of an elegant Parisian bourgeoise. Sévérine (Catherine Deneuve), who is frigid with her handsome and considerate husband (Jean Sorel), spends her afternoons as a prostitute in a discreet, upscale brothel. The movie, adapted by Buñuel and Jean-Claude Carrière from a popular novel by Joseph Kessel, is a pristine example of the great filmmaker's serenely outrageous late style. In this picture, desire has a de-luxe blandness that's both mysterious and deeply, unnervingly funny. Also with Michel Piccoli, Geneviève Page, and Pierre Clementi. In French.—T.R. (19th Street East 6 and Paris.)

BLACKBOARD JUNGLE (1955)—The subject—contempt for authority (in a metropolitan trade school)—is treated as a problem with a definite solution. Surrounded by hostile and delinquent boys, the hero, an idealistic teacher, played by Glenn Ford, tries to reach the salvageable one among them—Sidney Poitier, who gives an angry, exciting performance. The director, Richard Brooks, wrote the script, adapted from Evan Hunter's novel, and it's sane and well worked out, though it's hard for audiences to believe in the hero's courage. Once again, a "daring" Hollywood movie exposes social tensions—touches a nerve—and then pours on the sweet nothings. But along the melodramatic way, there are some startling episodes (and one first-rate bit of racial interchange), and recordings by Bix Beiderbecke, Stan Kenton, Bill Holman, and Bill Haley and the Comets set quite a pace. Glenn Ford seethes all the time, but he's fairly competent. With Louis Calhern, who's always fun to watch; Margaret Hayes, as the teacher who's a candidate for rape; Anne Francis in the tiresome role of Ford's pregnant wife; Richard Kiley, as the embarrassingly weak-kneed teacher whose jazz records get smashed; and Vic Morrow, as the Brando-style hoodlum.—P.K. (Little Theatre; starting Aug. 25.)

NIGHT TRAIN TO MUNICH (1940)—A spruce anti-Nazi thriller, set on the eve of the Second World War. It's an unofficial follow-up to Hitchcock's "The Lady Vanishes," with the same spirited leading lady (Margaret Lockwood), the same farcically unflappable

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old-school Englishmen (Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne), and the same clever screenwriters (Sidney Gilliatt and Frank Launder). Rex Harrison plays a British agent who poses as a German officer in order to rescue Lockwood and her father (James Harcourt)—a Czech scientist with a crucial formula for armor plating—from the Gestapo. Suaveness becomes the Allies' secret weapon when Harrison deploys his rakish charm; the comedy and suspense mesh under Carol Reed's confident direction. With Paul Henreid as Harrison's rival.—M.S. (Walter Reade Theatre; Aug. 16-17.)

Rosemary's Baby (1968)—Pregnant women sometimes look at their men as if to say, "What did you do to me?" Rosemary (Mia Farrow), the Omaha-born girl who's now living in Manhattan, has reason to wonder, and this satirical gothic thriller, written and directed by Roman Polanski, from Ira Levin's novel, is told from her point of view. It's genuinely funny, yet it's also scary, especially for young women. Mia Farrow is enchanting in her fragility: she's just about perfect for her role. And the darkly handsome John Cassavetes is ideal as Rosemary's narcissistic actor-husband, who conspires with a coven, drugs her, and mates her with Satan, in exchange for a Broadway hit.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; starting Aug. 25.)

She Done Him Wrong (1933)—Mae West, the great shady lady of the screen, wiggles and sings "Easy Rider" and seduces virtuous young Cary Grant. A classic comedy and a classic seduction. Written by the star, from her play "Diamond Lil"; directed by Lowell Sherman.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Aug. 25 and Aug. 29.)

The Sundowners (1960)—This major film by a major director (Fred Zinnemann) was neglected when it came out—possibly because Warners didn't believe that people would go to see a movie set in Australia. It's a large, episodic movie, with a strong emotional texture—an epic about the space and emptiness of the country, and about Robert Mitchum as a man who doesn't want to stay in one place, and Deborah Kerr as the wife who keeps moving with him, raising a son (Michael Anderson, Jr.) who has never known a settled existence. Though the story builds slowly, the characters are more red-blooded and vigorous and eccentric than in most other Zinnemann films. Deborah Kerr isn't at all aristocratic or mannered here; this may be her richest performance. Peter Ustinov and Glynis Johns play a secondary, contrasting pair of lovers.—P.K. (American Museum of the Moving Image; Aug. 27.)

Thérèse Desqueyroux (1962)—Emmanuèle Riva as François Mauriac's Thérèse, the provincial bourgeois lady who attempts to murder her gross, prosperous husband (Philippe Noiret) for the best and worst of reasons: he is dull. Directed by Georges Franju, and filmed in the cold Bordeaux of marshes and moors; it was shot on Mauriac's own estate. You see bourgeois comfort and hypocrisy through the eyes of the sensitive intelligent person who registers exactly what it all is—you see through Thérèse the poisoner's eyes. The film is measured and relentless, and very beautiful in an ascetic way—but when it's over you're not likely to say, "Let's sit through it again." In French.—P.K. (Florence Gould Hall; Aug. 29.)

They Knew What They Wanted (1940)—The Sidney Howard play was highly regarded in 1924, and Hollywood was drawn to this adulterous drama of the San Francisco waitress who agrees to marry Tony Patucci, an Italian grape grower in the Napa Valley, and then, in spite of herself, is seduced by the bridegroom's hired man. Carole Lombard sucks in her gorgeous cheeks and tries to look as if she's desperate to escape a life of poverty and drudgery; while Charles Laughton, as the good-hearted Tony, wears overalls and a droopy mustache, waves his arms ebulliently, and laughs with so much Latin gusto that even Anthony Quinn might be stunned. Lombard and Laughton work

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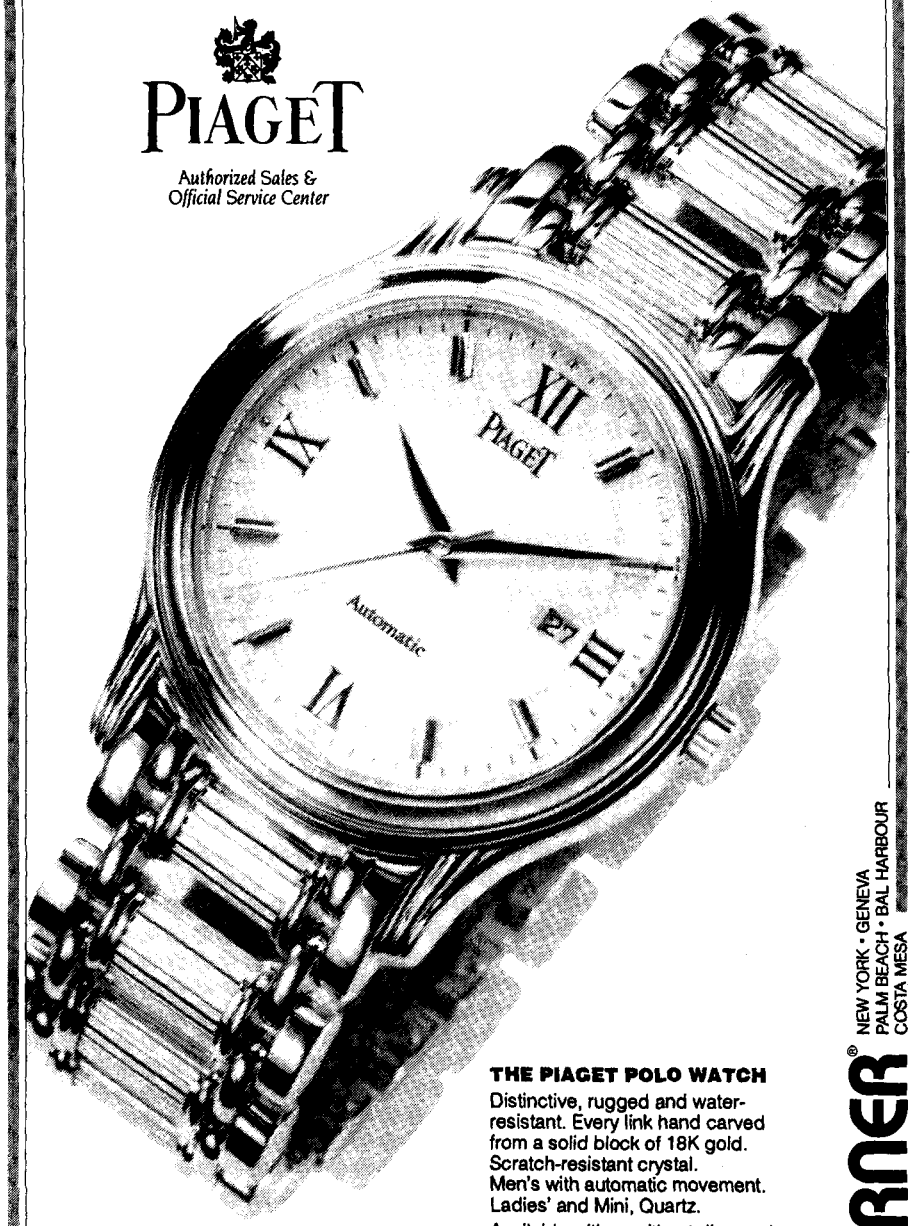

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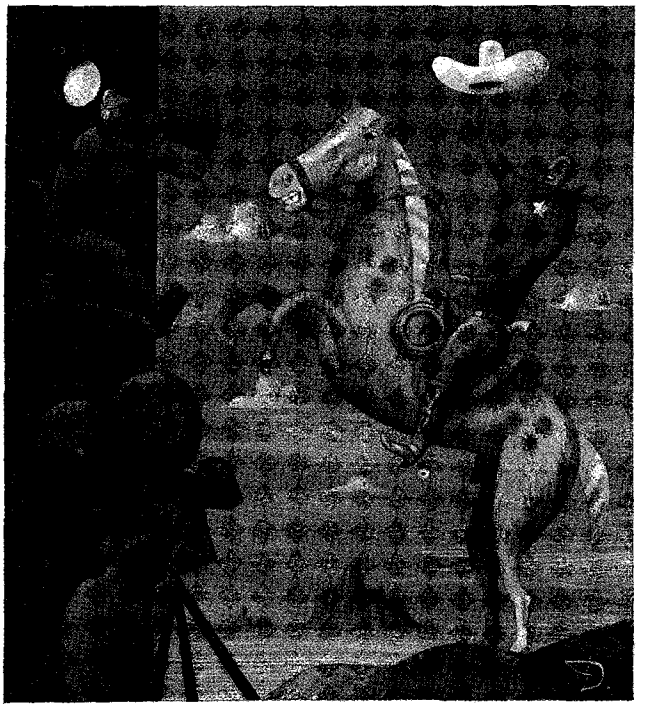
at their roles seriously, but who wants to see her in dowdy clothes thinking thoughts, and who wants to see him being earthy and simple and wise? (He has some ingenious moments, but his "ethnic" acting isn't remotely Italian-American—at times he might be playing Charlie Chan.) Directed by Garson Kanin, from Robert Ardrey's adaptation.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Aug. 20-21.)

Victor/Victoria (1982)—The writer-director Blake Edwards' rough-and-tumble boudoir farce centers on Julie Andrews as Victoria, an English singer stranded in Paris in 1934, who pretends to be a man so that she can get work as a female impersonator. When the infuriatingly sane and distant Andrews finally gets into men's clothes, there's nothing remotely funny about it. And you don't believe that she could successfully impersonate a woman on the stage. As an aging homosexual entertainer who trains Victoria to pass as Victor, Robert Preston plays a sentimental stereotype so heartily and likably that he redeems the musty material. James Garner, acting like a funny, scowly Clark Gable, is a night-club owner from Chicago, and, as the girlfriend he discards when he falls for Victoria, Lesley Ann Warren, gone blond, does dippy, exaggerated versions of Jean Harlow's nasal petulance. This picture features speeches about sexual politics that are the latest in show-biz enlightenment; it also features a chorus line that may be the most contemptuous display of women's bodies ever seen in a major-studio movie. Based on the 1933 German film comedy "Viktor und Viktoria"; this is at least the fifth version.—P.K. (A Different Light Bookstore; Aug. 27.)



BLAIR DRAWSON

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)—A program of films directed by William Castle. Through Aug. 17: "Homicidal" (1961) and "The Night Walker" (1964).... Aug. 18-20: "The Tingler" (1959).... Aug. 21: "When Strangers Marry" (1944), "The Whistler" (1944), and "It's a Small World" (1950).... Aug. 22-23: "Mr. Sardonicus" (1961) and "The Old Dark House" (1963).... Aug. 24: "Strait-Jacket" (1964) and "I Saw What You Did!" (1965).... ¶ From Aug. 25: "Rosemary's Baby" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363)—The 1995 Festival Hong Kong; all the films are in Cantonese, with English and Chinese subtitles. Aug. 16: "The New Legend of Shaolin" (1994, Wong Jing), with Jet Li and Tse Miu.... Aug. 17 and 21: "Return of the God of Gamblers" (1994, Jing), with Chow Yun-fat and Tony Leung.... Aug. 18 and 29: "Twenty Something" (1994, Teddy Chan), with Chow Ka-lin and Bai Gar-shien.... Aug. 19, 23, and 28: "Fist of Legend" (1994, Gordon Chan), with Li and Nakayama Shinobu.... Aug. 20 and 24: "He's a Woman, She's a Man" (1994, Peter Chan), with Leslie Cheung and Anita Yuen.... Aug. 22: "C'est la Vie, Mon Cheri" (1993, Derek Yee), with Yuen and Lau Chin-yun.... Aug. 25: "City on Fire" (1987, Ringo Lam), with Yun-fat and Danny Lee.... Aug. 26: "Executioners" (1994, Johnny To), with Michelle Khan, Maggie Cheung, and Anita Mui.... Aug. 27: "Butterfly Lovers" (1994, Tsui Hark), with Nicky Wu and Charlie Young.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A series of films made from Broadway plays. Aug. 17 at 2:30 and Aug. 19 at 3:15: "Waterloo Bridge" (1931, James Whale).... Aug. 17 at 6: "Waterloo Bridge" (1940, Mervyn LeRoy).... Aug. 18 at 2:30 and Aug. 21 at 6: "Kismet" (1920, Louis J. Garnier; silent).... Aug. 18 at 6 and Aug. 22 at 1: "Holiday" (1930, Edward H. Griffith).... Aug. 18 at 8 and Aug. 25 at 2:30: "The Animal Kingdom" (1932, Griffith).... Aug. 19 at 1 and Aug. 24 at 2:30: "Seventh Heaven" (1927, Frank Borzage; silent).... Aug. 19 at 5 and Aug. 21 at 1: "A Lady to Love" (1930, Victor Seastrom).... Aug. 20 at 1 and Aug. 21 at 3: "They Knew What They Wanted" (†).... Aug. 20 at 3: "Payment Deferred" (1932, Lothar Mendes).... Aug. 20 at 5 and Aug. 22 at 3: "Holiday" (1938, George Cukor).... Aug. 22 at 6 and Aug. 29 at 3: "The Awful Truth" (†).... Aug. 24 at 6: "All the Way Home" (†).... Aug. 24 at 8: "A Thousand Clowns" (1965, Fred Coe).... Aug 25 at 6 and Aug. 28 at 3: "Twentieth Century" (1934, Howard Hawks).... Aug. 25 at 8 and Aug. 29 at 6: "She Done Him Wrong" (†).... Aug. 26 at 1: "Larceny, Inc." (1942, Lloyd Bacon).... Aug. 26 at 3 and Aug. 28 at 1: "A Slight Case of Murder" (1938, Bacon).... Aug. 26 at 5 and Aug. 29 at 1: "Boy Meets Girl" (1938, Bacon).... Aug. 27 at 1: "The Cat and the Canary" (1927, Paul Leni).... Aug. 27 at 3: "Death Takes a Holiday" (1934, Mitchell Leisen).... Aug. 27 at 5: "Outward Bound" (1930, Robert Milton).... Aug. 28 at 6: "The Miracle Worker" (1962, Arthur Penn).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600)—Aug. 16 at 2, 6, and 9:40 and Aug. 17 at 3:30 and 9: "Night Train to Munich" (†).... ¶ Aug. 16 at 4 and 8 and Aug. 17 at 2: "The Great Impersonation" (1935, Alan Crosland).... ¶ Aug. 17 at 6:30: "Nothing to Lose" (1995, Eric Bross).... ¶ Aug. 18 at 2, 6, and 9:30 and Aug. 19 at 4 and 7:45: "Mata Hari" (1932, George Fitzmaurice), with Greta Garbo, Ramon Novarro, and Lionel Barrymore.... ¶ Aug. 18 at 4 and 7:45 and Aug. 19 at 6 and 9:30: "Dishonored" (1931, Josef von Sternberg), with Marlene Dietrich and

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Victor McLaglen. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 6 and Aug. 22 at 6:30: "Spies" (1929, Fritz Lang; silent). . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 2, 5:10, and 8:30 and Aug. 22 at 3:30: "Nazi Agent" (1942, Jules Dassin). . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 3:40, 7, and 10 and Aug. 22 at 2: "Three Faces East" (1930, Roy Del Ruth), with Erich von Stroheim and Constance Bennett. . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 2, 6, and 9:40 and Aug. 24 at 4 and 8: "The House on 92nd Street" (1945, Henry Hathaway). . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 3:45 and 7:45 and Aug. 24 at 2, 6, and 9:40: "The Whistle Blower" (1986, Simon Langton), with Michael Caine, James Fox, and Nigel Havers. . . . ¶ Aug. 25 at 2, 5:15, and 8:25 and Aug. 26 at 5:40 and 9: "My Favorite Blonde" (1942, Sidney Lanfield), with Bob Hope and Madeleine Carroll. . . . ¶ Aug. 25 at 3:40, 6:50, and 10 and Aug. 26 at 4 and 7:20: "The Lady Has Plans" (1942, Lanfield), with Paulette Goddard and Ray Milland. . . . ¶ Aug. 27 at 4 and 7:30 and Aug. 28 at 2, 6, and 9:30: "Above Suspicion" (1943, Lanfield). . . . ¶ Aug. 27 at 5:45 and 9:15 and Aug. 28 at 4 and 7:45: "Cottage to Let" (1941, Anthony Asquith), with Alastair Sim, John Mills, and Leslie Banks. . . . ¶ Aug. 29 at 2: "Diplomatic Courier" (1952, Hathaway), with Tyrone Power, Hildegarde Neff, and Patricia Neal. . . . ¶ Aug. 29 at 4: "Background to Danger" (1943, Raoul Walsh), with George Raft, Brenda Marshall, and Sydney Greenstreet. . . . ¶ Weekend showings for children. Aug. 19-20 at 2: "Big Top Pee-Wee" (1988, Randal Kleiser), with Pee-wee Herman. . . . Aug. 26-27 at 2: "At the Circus" (†).

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—Television shows by the team of William Hanna and Joseph Barbera. Through Aug. 27: "Yogi Bear" and "The Perils of Penelope Pitstop."

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (1-718 784-0077)—Three programs of short films featuring the Three Stooges. Through Aug. 18 at 10:30, 1, and 2:30: "False Alarms" (1936), "Crash Goes the Hash" (1944), and "Healthy, Wealthy and Dumb" (1938). . . . Aug. 22-25 at 10:30, 1, and 2:30: "Grips, Grunts and Groans" (1937), "Three Little Twirps" (1943), and "In the Sweet Pie and Pie" (1941). . . . From Aug. 29 at 10:30, 1, and 2:30: "Dizzy Doctors" (1937), "Dizzy Detectives" (1943), and "From Nurse to Worse" (1940). . . . ¶ A series of films starring Robert Mitchum. Aug. 19 at 2: "Where Danger Lives" (1950, John Farrow). . . . Aug. 19 at 4: "His Kind of Woman" (1951, Farrow). . . . Aug. 20 at 2: "Home from the Hills" (1960, Vincente Minnelli). . . . Aug. 20 at 5: "Undercurrent" (1946, Minnelli). . . . Aug. 26 at 2: "River of No Return" (1954, Otto Preminger). . . . Aug. 26 at 4: "Cape Fear" (1962, J. Lee Thompson). . . . Aug. 27 at 2: "Thunder Road" (1958, Arthur Ripley). . . . Aug. 27 at 4: "The Sundowners" (†).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Aug. 20 at 7, the feature will be "Billie" (1965, Don Weis), with Patty Duke; on Aug. 27 at 7: "Victor/Victoria" (†).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Aug. 22 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "The Hairdresser's Husband" (1990, Patrice Leconte; in French). . . . ¶ Aug. 29 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Thérèse Desqueyroux" (†).

Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St.—Mondays, starting at dusk: free drive-in-style moviegoing, beginning with Looney Tunes and coming attractions. The feature on Aug. 21 will be "The Searchers" (1956, John Ford), with John Wayne, Ward Bond, Vera Miles, Natalie Wood, and Jeffrey Hunter. On Aug. 28, the feature will be "Auntie Mame" (1958, Morton DaCosta), with Rosalind Russell. (Rain date is the following night.)

Film al Fresco, at Le Madri Restaurant, 168 W. 18th St. (727-8022)—Sunday evenings, more films out-of-doors, with food and live music beginning at 6 and the movie starting at about 8:30. On Aug. 20, the feature will be "Tampopo" (1986, Juzo Itami; in Japanese).

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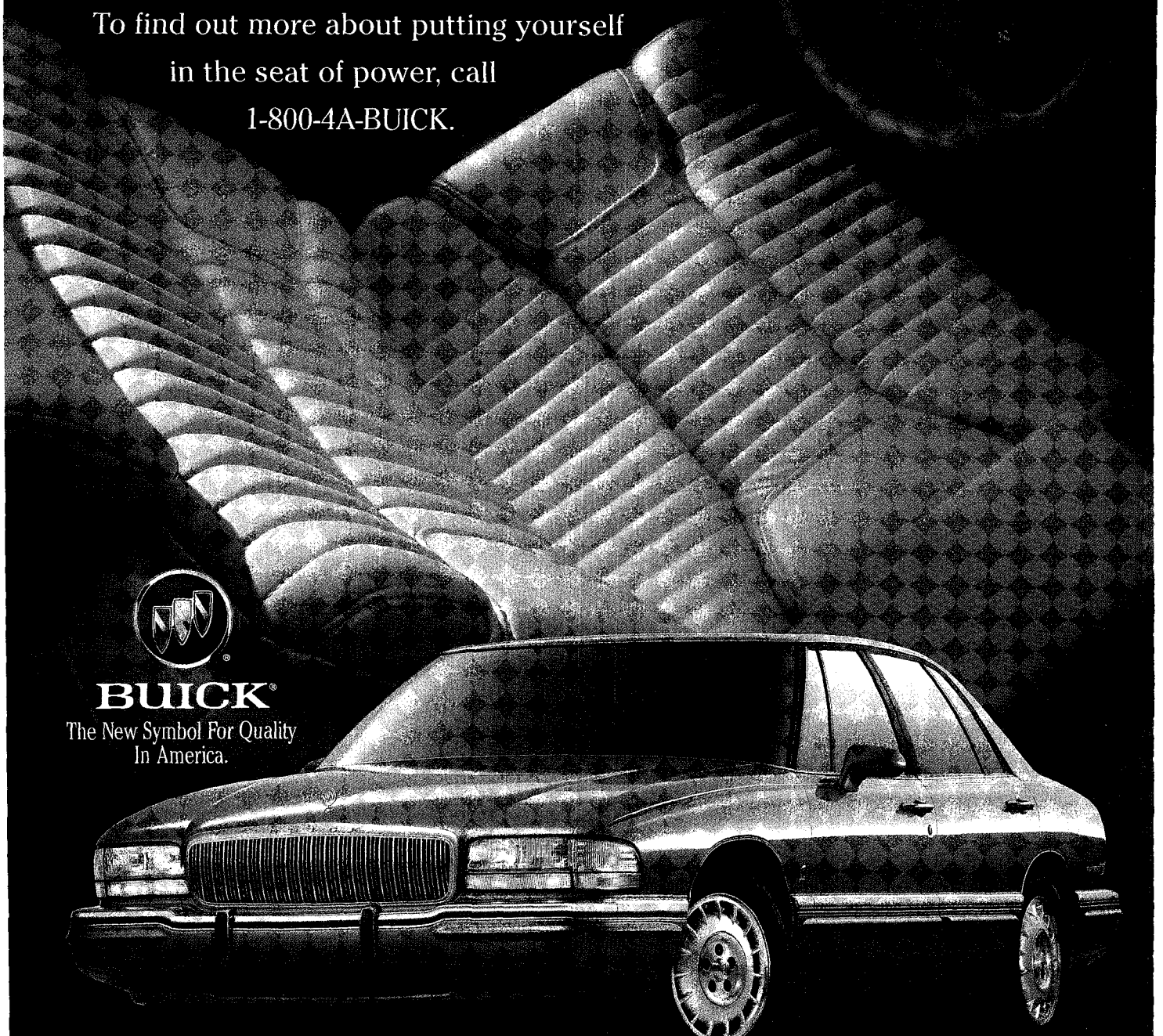

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

A behind-the-scenes look at what's coming up—onscreen, onstage, on court, and off the racks.

PICASSO PIC HAS HEIRS SEEING RED!

PABLO PICASSO'S unruly spirit is mighty yet. Certainly the Master's presence is being felt around "Surviving Picasso," the movie that James Ivory begins shooting in Paris next month. The subject of the film is Picasso's decade-long relationship with Françoise Gilot, which began in 1943, when she was twenty-one and he was almost three times that. During those years, Picasso moved to the South of France and made paintings that celebrated his life there with Gilot, sometimes including Claude and Paloma, their son and daughter. Just what examples of this work will you see in "Surviving Picasso"? If Claude Picasso and the Picasso estate have their way, none.

The problem began when Claude, who lives in Paris and administers the estate, read the script, which is by the Merchant Ivory veteran Ruth Prawer Jhabvala. It is to be expected that those who figure in any dramatic biography—book or movie—may not find the way they are treated a hundred per cent to their liking. Still, the filmmakers seem to have felt that this case would be different, because Gilot is depicted as an anomaly in the Maestro's life—the Woman Who Got Away—which is the way she depicts herself in her memoir, "Life with Picasso." The family, however, is not mollified one bit. "It's mostly dialogue lifted from my mother's book and reorganized in the most absolutely absurd way. And then certain elements have been added to make it quote unquote coherent," Claude said in New York recently. "Things have become a travesty of anything that ever happened." He added that his mother feels the same way—"Even more so."

Now, there is nothing to prevent anybody from writing a book or shooting a movie about a public figure, even against that person's most furious wishes, and Ivory has said that the script was based on "many, many books." But reproducing that public person's art is quite another thing. Some weeks ago, lawyers for the Picasso estate advised Warner Bros., under whose aegis the movie is being made, that all permissions to show the work were being withheld. The American law concerning copyrights to work by artists who died within the last half century is complex. French law, though, tends to uphold the rights of heirs to a copyright, and therefore the reproduction rights, regardless of who may own the actual work.

THE sangfroid of the makers of "Surviving Picasso" seems, under the circumstances, remarkable. "The movie is about Picasso's character . . . power," said David Wolper, who, with Ismail Merchant, is producing the movie for Warner. "And how Picasso's art changes as his women change."

Just how will the movie show his changing art? "It's a tricky law," Wolper said. "As they have done in many films, you can do what you call a copy. It's a look-alike. It's not a Picasso, but it's a look-alike.

"Obviously, pictures will be painted in the film," he added, saying, "If you show a preliminary phase, you're not showing a painting. You know what I mean? If you have a picture with four lines on the canvas, it's not the painting."

Will there be any actual completed works from Picasso's hand in the movie? "Well, some works we'll be able to show and some we won't," Wolper said, with the manner of one treading on eggs.

"There are certain works that are owned by certain members of the estate. And there are certain paintings that are not owned by certain members of the estate."

Claude Picasso is baffled by Wolper's claim that the movie might be able to show any of his father's art works at all. "I don't see how. The rights cover the complete œuvre," he said. "They can't show the art. So now they are going to make some Picassoid-whatever things. They are like forgeries, and they are going to give a very bad impression of the art-

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ist. The whole thing becomes a farce!"

"I guess they may have to have the appropriate disclaimers included," Peter Shukat, one of the estate's New York lawyers, speculated. "Otherwise, they may have appropriate problems."

Whether this aesthetic equivalent of the Surgeon General's warning would appease Claude is uncertain, though. Right now, he is primed to have the gendarmerie swoop down on the set on the first day of filming. "That is what you do," he said with a sigh. "Because, you see, they are perpetrating a forgery. In France, it's very clear-cut."

LET THE REAL TENNIS BEGIN

Monica Seles

On August 28th, Monica Seles will mark her return to Grand Slam tennis by competing at the U.S. Open, at Flushing Meadow. In recent weeks, there was some discussion among her peers about where—or whether—she should be ranked. A reasonable response to the question should have been "Wherever she likes." But the leading ladies, we gather, were reluctant to extend such an unqualified welcome. It was as if the remnants of the A.N.C. had greeted Nelson Mandela at the prison gates with a demand to inspect his Party card.

Currently, in the women's game, there are six players you would cross the street to watch—though you'll have to hurry if you want to watch Steffi Graf, because most of her matches last less than an hour. Mary Pierce, brimful of her own presence, is a drama queen with an imperious forehand. Jana Novotna snarls like a Spielberg velociraptor as she hits her approach shot and makes for the net. The arcs delineated by the racquet of Conchita Martínez are as classically perfect as those of Martina Navratilova. The rumpy retrievals of Arantxa Sánchez Vicario inspire fascination and awe. And Gabriela Sabatini retains her poetic appeal. And that's it. The tournaments are training drills until you reach the quarter-finals. Then the tennis begins.

Seles was finally given a ranking of joint No. 1, shared with Graf. Anything less would have been a ridiculous disgrace. Twenty-seven months ago, Seles was stabbed in the back; on her return, she has had to hang around while her peers tried to shoot themselves in the foot. Lacking strength in depth, the women's game needs a great rivalry. Steffi Graf needs Monica Seles—they all do. They need her the way they need air.

BACKSTAGE WITH THE BOYZ

7:55 P.M. Backstage at Madison Square Garden, a tall, boyish-looking guard stands alone by the door that leads to a hallway that leads to the dressing room for Boyz II Men, the wildly successful pop quartet from Philadelphia whose brand of harmony and romance has sold eighteen million albums over the past four years. Tonight's show is part of the annual R. & B. and hip-hop tour, the Budweiser Superfest, which runs through August 27th. Boyz II Men are headlining with support from Mary J. Blige, TLC, and Montell Jordan. All the performers are black; indeed, so is nearly everyone backstage. The guard, however, is white—and he's feeling it.

His job is to allow only those with proper credentials to pass him. But the very few who don't have proper credentials—for example, the basketball star Grant Hill, the rapper Heavy D, and the male model Tyson—have so much star energy and black cool that they vault right past the Boy-Guard without even acknowledging him. So, despite his high-school-linebacker frame, the Boy-Guard looks about as intimidating as a butter knife.

8:20 P.M. A white stretch limousine appears in the driveway, just outside the door, and three members of Boyz II Men—Nathan Morris, Mike McCary, and Shawn Stockman—step out. Dressed in T-shirts and jeans or shorts, they walk briskly past the Boy-Guard and disappear down the hallway.

A few minutes later, a white van pulls up, and the last member of the group, Wanya Morris (he's not related to Nathan), steps out, wearing expensive-looking beige pants and a striped sweater. He strolls slowly from the van toward a pair of girls who seem to know him, and kisses each of them softly on the cheek. Then, while loosely holding one girl's hand, he swivels toward the dressing room. There is no public leader in Boyz II Men, but, watching Wanya walk through the crowd, you wouldn't know it. Unlike the others, Wanya looks like a star.

9:16 P.M. "It's boring back here, dude," Nathan says, lounging on a love seat in the dressing room. A quick scan of the room proves him right: no voluptuous women, no flowing Moët. On one table sits an untouched birthday cake for Wanya (he's twenty-two today); on another table are a few plates of vegetables and candy, also mostly untouched. In one corner, there's a large bench press and weights, for Mike, who spends most of his time before the show pressing, curling, and lifting. Slouching around the room are various children—group members' nieces and nephews and cousins—who also seem bored.

10:21 P.M. Wanya, Shawn, and Nathan are standing behind the soundboard at the side of the stage, intently watching TLC perform. They are professionals evaluating other professionals, but their posture hints at a second energy: they lean on the board with their shoulders touching, looking like small boys enjoying their own camaraderie.

10:50 P.M. Wanya, Shawn, and Nathan are in the dressing room, changing into the first outfit of the show: near-military-green knit vests over white-collared polo shirts with white denim jeans and brown bootlike shoes. Shawn picks up a cup of hot tea. Wanya begins preparing an inhaler, which he uses, he says, "to open up my vocal cords so I can hit my notes."

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Then Mike walks in. "Your boy's out there," he says to everyone, and pauses for effect. "His Royal Purpleness—Prince." Another dramatic pause. "Hidin' behind the soundboard."

"He's always hiding there," someone says.

Mike launches into an impression, bending over as if to make himself smaller, walking slowly, putting a large bounce into each step, and looking slyly from side to side. After four bouncy steps, he says in a voice unnaturally deep and throaty even for him, "Thanks for comin' out." The others crumble into laughter.

"And smellin' good!" one adds.

"Smellin' like potpourri!" Mike clarifies.

10:57 P.M. The dressing-room door opens, and the New York Knick Anthony Mason bends his head and rumbles through. Today, Mason, who argued publicly with his coach during the past season, is looking for some career guidance. "What y'all doin'?" he asks.

"Strappin' up for battle," Nathan says, as he pulls a clean white sock up past the cuff of his clean white denim jeans.

"What are *you* doin'?" someone asks Mason.

"Tryin' to decide what I should do," he says.

"Go to Philly with Stackhouse," Nathan says, making a plug for the 76ers, the group's home-town team.

Mason makes a face.

"Oh," Shawn says, the true point of the conversation dawning on him. "You're tryin' to win!"

"So go to Seattle," Mike says.

"Go to Chicago," someone adds helpfully.

"The funny thing about Philly," Mason says, "is that every time someone gets good and tries to get more money they shop 'em around."

"Philly don't like to pay," Wanya says. "Our whole city's like that."

11:21 P.M. The group, now dressed for battle, meets its managers and its band at the top of the hallway for prayer. "We thank you for blessing us with a safe trip," Shawn begins, "despite the bus breaking down. . . . Please give us the power to be entertainers and make everyone in the audience happy. . . . Please, Lord, help us stay focussed on what we need to do."

The four stretch a bit more, then walk down to the end of the hallway and stand near the door. Finally, they are alone with one of their bodyguards. Everyone else—the people who protect them, teach them, publicize them, defend them, write for them, play for them, wait on them—is gone. The four begin giving each other strong, chest-to-chest hugs, punctuated by firm backslaps.

"Happy birthday, Wan!" one of them calls out. "I know you're gonna do it tonight!"

"Pop them steps like we just learned them!"

"Let's go make the doughnuts!" Shawn adds dryly.

A moment later, the door opens and the four run out and bound up the ramp leading to the stage. The audience near the stage hears their steps and begins screaming. The four keep running through the dark and take their positions onstage.

AUSTEN ANEW

"CLUELESS," based on "Emma," is already a hit; "Persuasion" opens in the fall; "Sense and Sensibility" is coming at Christmas; and "Emma" is being shot right now. Clearly, it's Austenmania in filmland this season. Why ever so?

•

LINDSAY DORAN, producer, "Sense and Sensibility": I think the idea of investigating romance—does it kill young girls or make them better?—is intriguing to a lot of us. And then "The Age of Innocence" actually got made. That made it acceptable. Everybody said, "Wow! You can get that cast and that director for *that*?" So they all just went to their favorite books. It's like everybody in Hollywood went back to school.

•

ROGER MICHELL, director, "Persuasion": People are attracted to films about sexual restraint, which there is a lot of in Austen. There's a whole new kind of film, where people don't kiss or have sex—a new kind of eroticism. All of Austen's characters are entirely accepting of the world as it is. Austen was really the last Augustan. Her characters would have seen Byron as Jimi Hendrix—totally shocking.

•

DOUG MCGRATH, director, "Emma": It's funny, because first there is no Jane Austen and then it's *raining* Jane Austen. It's all about words. I mean, I am living proof of the collapse of language, so it's great to watch a society and a culture where language meant everything. The power comes not from action but from these declarations—what they say and don't say to each other. And, of course, so much of Austen is dialogue that it's already written—you can just copy it down onto the script page.

•

ALICIA SILVERSTONE, star, "Clueless": My character's rules are all about *things*. She follows these rules—which are totally from some book, but which are absurd. But her rules *are* right out there, and in the end she says it's O.K. to like boys and clothes and be who she is. I've been meaning to read "Emma," like, forever.

•

AMANDA ROOT, star, "Persuasion": I hate to talk about women's lib—I hate the words!—but women still need to reaffirm that they have equal power with men. Austen deals with that, pretty positively. My character faces a life of spinsterhood, yet she gets on with it, and not in a weepy way. So she deserves to get the kiss we gave her at the end of the film. But I think it says something that that kiss, because it isn't in the book, made a lot of people go completely mental!

•

ANG LEE, director, "Sense and Sensibility": It's all about fate and wrestling with fate. And restraint. There are always restraints in Austen's

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world. And today you have new restraints—what with P.C., and all that. Austen is asking, "How do you cope with people?" You can't be alone. It wasn't all that free then, and it's not that free now.

THE SERIOUS BUSINESS OF BEING FUNNY

IN the life of a comedian, the first laugh is as indelible as first love. Carol Burnett remembers the moment exactly. She was a freshman at U.C.L.A. in 1951, majoring in Theatre Arts/English, which had as part of its foundation course Acting 1-A, where she was cast as a hillbilly in a one-acter, "Kiki: A Woman Grown." Burnett, who was born in San Antonio and moved to Hollywood at the age of eight, delivered the first line of her first stage performance in the broad, swooping Tex-Arkana drawl she'd known as a child. "I'm baaack!" Burnett said, and the place exploded. "The minute the laugh happened, I was floating," Burnett says, characterizing herself up to that ravishing turning point as a gawky, quiet, obedient girl whom boys were slow pursuing. "The next day, I was very popular," she says.

For nearly four decades, Burnett's clowning—a combination of tomboy athleticism, shrewd observation, and noisy mugging—has kept her popular. "The Carol Burnett Show" ran from 1967 to 1978 and won twenty-five Emmy Awards along the way. As a sketch comedienne, Burnett—along with Fanny Brice, Judy Holliday, Nancy Walker, and Lucille Ball—has her own special niche in the nation's short history of joy. Even as she walks to the local Indian restaurant around the corner after a morning of rehearsing her newest romp, "Moon Over Buffalo," which opens at the Martin Beck on October 1st, the construction men hunkered down at midday over their lunchpails look up to shout "Hi, Carol!"

For her first Broadway appearance in thirty years, Burnett and her co-star, Philip Bosco, will play a married pair of touring rep actors, the Lunts of the lumpen, who are faced with one last chance at the brass ring. In Burnett's real life, except for a dry spell after she left "The Garry Moore Show," which launched her TV career in the late fifties, and a brief period after the end of her own show, she has more or less kept a firm hold on that brass ring. "I don't need to be challenged," Burnett says. "It's the effort that's the fun. I think we forget that the reason we got into this business in the first place was 'Let's pretend.' It's getting back to the sandbox. That's where you can act as crazy as you want and not be put away."

Burnett was reared on welfare by her grandmother, down the hall from her disappointed and alcoholic mother, in an apartment building a block north of Hollywood Boulevard. When she was growing up, she wrapped herself in screen fantasy. "My life was going to the movies," she says. "Eight a week. The movies gave me hope." She'd go to the movies and then act them out with her friends. "My cousin and I played Tarzan and Jane," she says. "She was beautiful, so I was Tarzan. That's how I learned to yell." At home, the yelling was for real. Today, Burnett, the mother of three grown daughters, admits, "It's not in me to yell or have a temper tantrum. I'm too frightened of anger. I was around so much anger that I behaved the other way. And so when I had children I behaved as though I were Loretta Young."

Carol Burnett

"I NEVER know who I'm going to be unless I know what I'm going to look like," Burnett says. She gives a lot of credit for her TV success to the costume designer Bob Mackie, who turned out fifty costumes a week for the entire run of "The Carol Burnett Show" and has designed the costumes for "Moon Over Buffalo." It was Mackie whose tight black dress with a baggy rear end led Burnett to find the character of Mrs. Wiggins, with her patented gait that became known as "the Wiggins Walk," and Mackie who went one better than the scriptwriters in a parody of "Gone with the Wind" which called for Burnett as Scarlett O'Hara to descend Tara's staircase in a dress made from draperies. Mackie gave Burnett a dress made from the draperies *and* the curtain rod. "It got one of the longest sight-gag laughs of our show—of any show," Burnett says.

Recently, Burnett moved from Los Angeles to Santa Fe, where she has built a house. For her, the city and the television industry became too much of a struggle, and she likes to keep things light. "I'm not a fighter," she says. "I like getting out there and playing. You play in theatre. There's not been one network head come into this rehearsal hall—just us and the director." In a few weeks, the whole tricky business of being funny will get more serious, and the comedienne will begin the careful calibration of characterization with the public. "I trust an audience," Burnett says. "They will tell you what you're doing. And they are never wrong. They are *never* wrong." Over the years, in this process, Burnett has also learned to "keep out of your own way," not to linger on mistakes, to follow the maxim of her grandmother—"Leave it lay where Jesus flung it." Meanwhile, to bolster the mysterious forces that rule over laughter, life, and talent, Burnett has acquired some special dirt from Chimayo, a Spanish church just north of Santa Fe, which is believed to have magic powers. "I put a little in a bit of Kleenex," she says, "fold it over, and put it in my left shoe under my left heel. It's Dumbo's feather—a little talisman. A thing to remind me that I can fly without the dirt, I can fly without the feather. But isn't it nice to know that we have the feather and the dirt?"

FASHION VICTIMS?

THE fall collections have arrived at Century 21, the downtown paradise for discount shoppers. It's late on a Friday afternoon, and you'd think that all shoppers would have fled the city. Not so. The shoppers are here. The European and Asian shoppers, who in recent years have begun to inundate the European-designer section, are out in force. This is according to the sales specialists, who assist the customers, and the "fluff girls," as the employees who cart the merchandise back and forth are sometimes called.

Today, two Italian women are grimly stuffing themselves into heavy wool

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Martin Margiela sweaters while waiting in line for a dressing room. Their faces are flushed and sweaty. The young, attractive fluff girls watch disdainfully. They say the customers go for the small sizes no matter what their girth. A size 14 will always try to cram her way into a size 6. This can result in minor catastrophes. "Just this morning, a lady got stuck in a Versace jacket," one sales specialist said. After much desperate tugging by a group of sales specialists and fluff girls, the burly store manager had to be summoned. It was a rather delicate situation, because in order to help the lady out of the jacket the manager had to "touch her in the front." Finally, after much flailing about, he "pried her out from the top."

In the old days, there were no dressing rooms at Century 21. And although two tiny, closetlike dressing rooms were recently installed, they are not enough. In order to try on an item of merchandise, a sales specialist must be found, to detach the snakelike cable that secures it to the rack. The scarcity of sales specialists often leads to rampant nudity on the floor, particularly among the European contingent. When a nearly naked customer is discovered and told to cover up, indignant exchanges often follow. The sales specialists agree that the "more liberal" Europeans become particularly indignant. When reprimanded, they often pretend they don't speak the language. One Frenchwoman was standing in her corner barebreasted, and when she was told to get

dressed she asked, "Are they that bad-looking?"

There are regulars at Century 21, just as there are regulars at the neighborhood bar. The regulars include a group of drag queens. A tall, brazen fluff girl, who rules one of the dressing rooms, says that the drag queens are far more knowledgeable about the merchandise than she is. The other day, a Canadian businessman came in at noon and stayed until almost closing, at 8 P.M., trying on Gaultier skirts for men in the aisles. When he was finally satisfied with his selection, he hightailed it over to the lingerie section for matching leggings.

PERENNIAL DIVA

When the soprano Jessye Norman arrived the other day at the New York Botanical Garden, in the Bronx, she looked queenly and radiant—just the way she looks in "Ariadne auf Naxos," only without a tiara. After a stroll through some displays of herbs and perennials, she sat on a wooden bench and talked about her passion for gardening. "When I was very young, back in Augusta, I planted my own cucumbers," she said. "They're perfect for a kid to watch—they grow so fast." Now Norman is partial to the orchids and roses with which her admirers so happily surround her, and in the summertime she plants geraniums in the garden of her home, in upstate New York. "I plant only red," she said. "And not just any red, mind you. I mean red-red. *Red red red.* I like reds because they're so lush."

Jessye Norman

Norman, who will grace the New York Philharmonic's opening gala on September 20th with some Strauss songs and the Immolation Scene from "Götterdämmerung," has sung in virtually every major opera house and concert hall on earth, and has amassed an array of medals, diplomas, and prizes that would sink an armada. She is as self-possessed and regal as Dido yet still as excitable as a student who sees the world as a place of infinite possibilities. At the Botanical Garden, she was wearing a long cotton dress with a matching jacket. It had a black-and-white print so fine-grained that it seemed to surround her in a haze. Bangles encircled her left wrist. "When I go out, I wear something that someone has given me," she said. "Very often, people will take things off their own bodies to give me as presents. A friend in Brazil gave me this one," she said, indicating a narrow metal hoop studded with small blue and magenta stones. "And this one is from a Japanese friend. It's made of wood—from a tree that doesn't grow here. It's also special because these trees aren't cut down in Japan. They're national treasures. So you have to wait till one dies of natural causes to do anything with it."

In honor of Norman's visit—she's a member of the board, but people dote on her anyway—Gregory Long, the affable, blue-eyed president of the Botanical Garden, had brought a selection of orchids into his air-conditioned office. Some were monstrous and lurid, and glowed as if with a secret radium. One looked as though a parade of white moths had fallen asleep against its tall, gently curving stem. Long pronounced their many-syllabled Latin names. Eventually, he came to a single blossom on a two-foot stalk which could have been constructed from scraps of tiger-striped silk.

"And this one is simply *quelque chose*," he said.

"Oh, *quelque chose* indeed!" Norman said. "I had no idea you were so adept at botanical nomenclature."

Long then presented Norman with an orchid of hers that had been unwell and had been convalescing at the Garden. He displayed a handmade cardboard case. "This is what it will go home in." Someone mentioned the Jessye Norman Orchid, and Long said, "We're expecting one from France—it's on its way, and we hope to bring it into flower in time for its presentation, in December."

Norman explained, "The horticultural society in France was gracious enough to name a new orchid variety in my honor. They had this beautiful ceremony at Versailles."

Soon Norman was off. As she walked to her waiting car, the conversation of two men who were standing nearby could be heard.

"Who is that?"

"She must be some kind of star."

"Yeah. Hasta be." ♦

This week's contributors: Anthony Haden-Guest, Martin Amis, Touré, Greg Critser, John Lahr, Betsy Berne, David Daniel.

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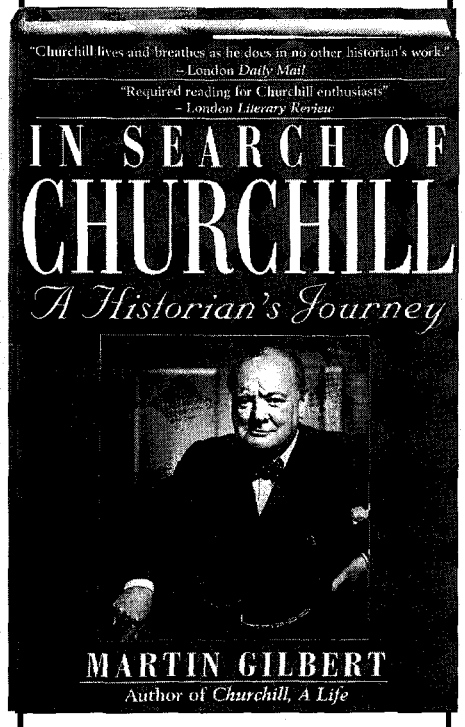

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DISPATCHES

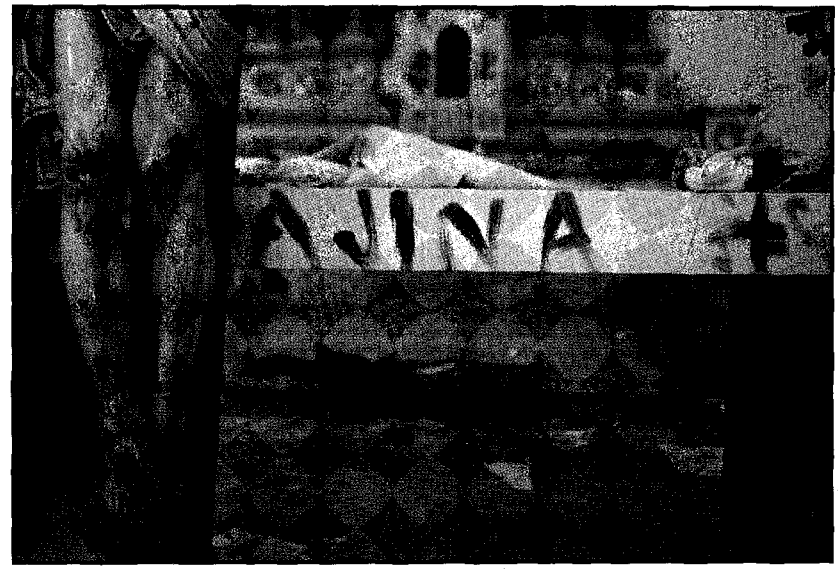
DAMAGE CONTROL

One thing Croatia has learned from America is how to manage the press. But even an official tour of former Serb-held territory can't hide the facts of war.

BY MICHAEL KELLY

On the fourth and, for all practical purposes, final morning of the 1995 war of the Krajina, the lobby of the Hotel Split was filled with unhappiness. The hotel is the hangout for journalists in the Croatian theatre of the Balkan wars. The press corps here is probably the best in the world right now. It is made up of veterans of the dirty wars in Africa and the Middle East and Central America, and adventurers, and people who have found in the job of chronicling the horrors of the Balkans a cause worth risking their lives for. Their pride is to cover war in the old way of wandering about looking for trouble and stories, and not in the new, American-style way of briefings and press packs and pool reports.

But the Croatian blitzkrieg, tacitly supported by the United States, turned out to be a very American sort of operation, a model of, among other things, efficient media management. The roads to the front were sealed from the first moment, and the Croatian Army proved itself to be briskly competent at catching and detaining trespassers—reminiscent of the control demonstrated by the American military in Panama and the Gulf. Requests for permission to visit the front were also skillfully dealt with, with polite instructions that sent the beseechers bouncing by fax and phone and audience from the Foreign Press Bureau to the Ministry of Culture and on to the Ministry of Defense, and back around again.



Required stops on one tour were a destroyed Croatian church and an untouched Serbian one. The message was clear: this conflict pitted barbarity against civilization.

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In the four days since the dawn artillery barrage that began the war, a great deal had happened. The Croatian Army, with help from its Bosnian allies, had recaptured virtually all the territory won by the Serbs in 1991 and was well into the business of wiping out their presence in the area. The Krajina, a border region in eastern Croatia with a large Serb population, which proclaimed itself an independent republic four years ago, was once again part of Croatia, its

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military force routed, its capital city of Knin taken, and the Serbs driven into exile.

Now, with the war winding down, the best chance to see what little remained of the action had come to this: a press bus tour to Knin. At nine o'clock in the morning, the word from the Foreign Press Bureau was that the trip was definitely on, and to stand by. The word was repeated at ten, eleven, twelve, one, and two. The journalists drifted discontentedly through the day, from coffee and inadequately cold Coca-Colas in the lobby to beer by the pool, muttering of rebellion and making last, desperate attempts via the lobby phones to gain permission to travel to Knin on their own.

At 3 P.M., the buses arrived, and between a hundred and fifty and two hundred journalists gathered somewhat sullenly under the sun in the parking lot. Names were called and credentials checked, and each of us was assigned to a bus. The motorcade that took off at about three-thirty from the Hotel Split was, by American political-campaign standards, a modest affair. It consisted of three buses, four police and Army cars, and three employees of the Foreign Press Bureau—one to manage each bus.

My press representative was a young man, by profession a translator, who wore the slightly Heepish, slightly exasperated air characteristic of most translators, the occupational result of dealing with people made peevish by their inability to understand what is being said around them. He spoke to the journalists in English, over the bus's public-address system. "Ladies and gentlemen, we are now entering the newly liberated territory of Croatia," he announced as the bus approached the Krajina. "Soon we will be in the town of Vrlika, where you will have half an hour off the bus."

"No, no, no," the journalists shouted. "Not interested. Knin. Knin. Please, go to Knin."

"But we will go to Knin after," the press-bureau man said. "You will have half an hour in Vrlika and a full hour in Knin."

"No, no, no," the journalists said.

"As a matter of fact, I *am* interested in Vrlika," said a German reporter in the rear of the bus. "I've been there before. It is a most interesting town, quite beautiful. I would like to see the effects of the war there, please."

"No, no, no!" yelled a British military correspondent. "Vrlika is of *absolutely* no consequence *what*soever! Straight to Knin, save the half hour from Vrlika, and an hour and a half in Knin!"

"So it is your wish that we go straight to Knin, and not go to Vrlika at all?" the press-bureau man asked.

"Yes! Yes! Yes!" the journalists said.

"I see," the press-bureau man said.

Ten minutes later, the motorcade stopped in a small town of old stone houses set high in the hills and dominated by the ruins of a minor medieval fort, on which could still be seen a faded "TITO" in white block letters thirty feet high. "Vrlika, ladies and gentlemen, we are now in the town of Vrlika," the press-bureau man said. "You have half an hour. Please, off the bus, thank you."

THERE was not a great deal to see in Vrlika. There had never been very much to the town—some peasant houses, some small farms, two churches, and a few stores. As a strategic entity, it was the sort of place an army falls back from rather than makes a stand at. Consequently, there were no scenes of ruined glory or utter devastation. Vrlika had merely been trashed in the routine fashion of war: a few buildings had been destroyed and most of the others had been holed to one degree or another, and the streets were full of the detritus of drinking and eating which soldiers always leave. Everything of value had been smashed or swiped by the retreating Serb Army or by the liberators. Other than troops, no people were on the streets. The Croatian inhabitants had been driven out by the Serbs in 1991, and now the Serbs had been driven out by the Croats. Soon Vrlika would fill up again with the Croatians, returning after four years as refugees.

A young Croat soldier drinking a can of beer was satisfied with how things were going. "Before the war in 1991, it was only Croatians here,"

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he said, mythologizing the ethnic purity of the past. "And maybe you could say that if there were fifty thousand people here forty-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine were Croatians. Then the Serbs stole everything. Now the Serbs are gone, and now we will be the best country in Europe. Economically, politically, militarily—the best. And the Serbs should be grateful to us. They should celebrate Mass to President Tudjman for as long as they live, because he let them keep their lives."

The press-bureau man urged the journalists up a hill toward Vrlika's Catholic church, a modest stone building barely bigger than a chapel. I knew what to expect here, because this was my second bus tour since the Croatian offensive began. Several days earlier, I had gone to the western Bosnian town of Glamoc, the first city to be recaptured by the allied Croatian and Bosnian forces. The required stops on that tour had been a Croatian Catholic church and a Serbian Orthodox church. The Croatian church had been dynamited and burned to the ground, and the Serbian Orthodox church remained standing, inviolate, a cool and soothing place filled with untouched treasures: a Byzantine cross of thick, hand-worn sterling, an old and lovely icon of a dark, pensive Jesus looking broodingly out from under half-lowered lids. The message of the juxtaposition was simple: the conflict between the Serbs and the Croats pitted barbarity against civilization, the animalism of Eastern hordes against Western standards of decency.

The Catholic church in Vrlika had been violated through and through. Its walls were pockmarked by bullet holes and scarred by insulting graffiti in the Cyrillic alphabet of the Serbs. "Fra Grabavac is a faggot," one said. The windows and chairs had been broken, and the floor was strewn with bottles and scraps of food. The holy-water font had been used as an ashtray. The crucifix had been dismembered—the Christ figure's arms had been broken off, and a soldier had picked up the head and was trying to find a way to reattach it to the neck. It was likely that this destruction had been the work of the Serbs. But it wasn't certain, and there were suggestions that perhaps the Croatians had orchestrated the desecration themselves. One inscription was in English, not Cyrillic, and it was a slogan of youthful anarchism I had seen in several places in Split: "Punk's Not Dead." It seemed an odd sort of hate message for a Serb to leave behind.

"Can't you introduce me without its sounding like flap copy?"

A FEW miles outside Vrlika, the press-bureau man took to the microphone again. "Ladies and gentlemen, you will please look out your right side. This is a little town named Kijevo, which was a hundred-percent-Croatian town before the war. As you can see, the houses and also the Catholic church here have been completely destructed. I am sorry to say you cannot get out to look, but you can regard from the bus." A minute later, the motorcade rolled by a burning farmhouse, the newly torched property of some departed Serb. The press-bureau man said nothing.

We moved on through stony fields and bare limestone hills, and into Knin. As we reached the edge of the city, the press-bureau man spoke in the tone of a host announcing a treat. "Ladies and gentlemen, we are now in Knin," he said. "You can see it in front of us. On the left side you may see the famous medieval fortress that is a symbol of Knin, and where is now hanging a twenty-metre-long Croatian flag. First, we are going to see this fortress."

"No, no, no! Open the door. Open the door."

"No, no, we must go first to the fortress," the press-bureau man said. "The soldiers told me to."

"No, no, no, no!"

"Open the door, you twit."

The press-bureau man sagged, and sat down. The door opened, and the press corps was finally released into Knin.

Knin, a grim little city, ugly to the bone, has been heavily marked by Communism's ubiquitous architectural legacy—the gray, damp, boxy concrete buildings that always look as if they were on the verge of disintegration,

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like cardboard cartons in the rain. War had not improved Knin. The Croatians had bombarded the city with several thousand shells, leaving a landscape of gouged buildings and spectacularly smashed cars. But Croatian Army cleaning crews had been at work for several days, and now the corpses were gone from the streets and fire trucks were busy hosing away the evidence of slaughter. All that remained was the smell and the flies, and, here and there, the dried, rusty splotches and smears that marked the spots where bodies had fallen. The photographers and cameramen descended upon those. The reporters and television correspondents went looking for residents to interview, but the pickings were slim. By this time, almost every Serb had fled Knin, and the seven or eight hundred Serbs who remained were mostly old people taking shelter under the protection of the United Nations in a camp on the outskirts of town.

Sad little pleas for mercy had been left behind. A Croatian Army officer showed me one, a handwritten note tacked to the front door of a small apartment building. "This is a Croatian home," the note read. "The owner is a refugee in Tribunj. Name of Gambiroza. Take what you want but please don't break anything." A second note was pinned to the door of the apartment itself: "This is a Croatian apartment. Try to spare it. Please, Niko Gambiroza." The officer shrugged. "I think maybe a Serb wrote this, really," he said. "It is very suspicious. How would a Croatian have stayed here during the Serb occupation?" The apartment had been looted and trashed, but perhaps the notes had had some effect, because it had not been burned.

There were plenty of Croatian soldiers loitering on the streets, having long since finished their serious looting. Every storefront in the city center had been shattered, and every shop thoroughly cleaned out, except one—a women's shoe store, whose front window displayed stands of pumps and slingbacks and sandals in anomalous daintiness amid the rubble. By now, the troops had settled down to something more like impulse shopping, popping into this store or that for items of merchandise as they needed them. I

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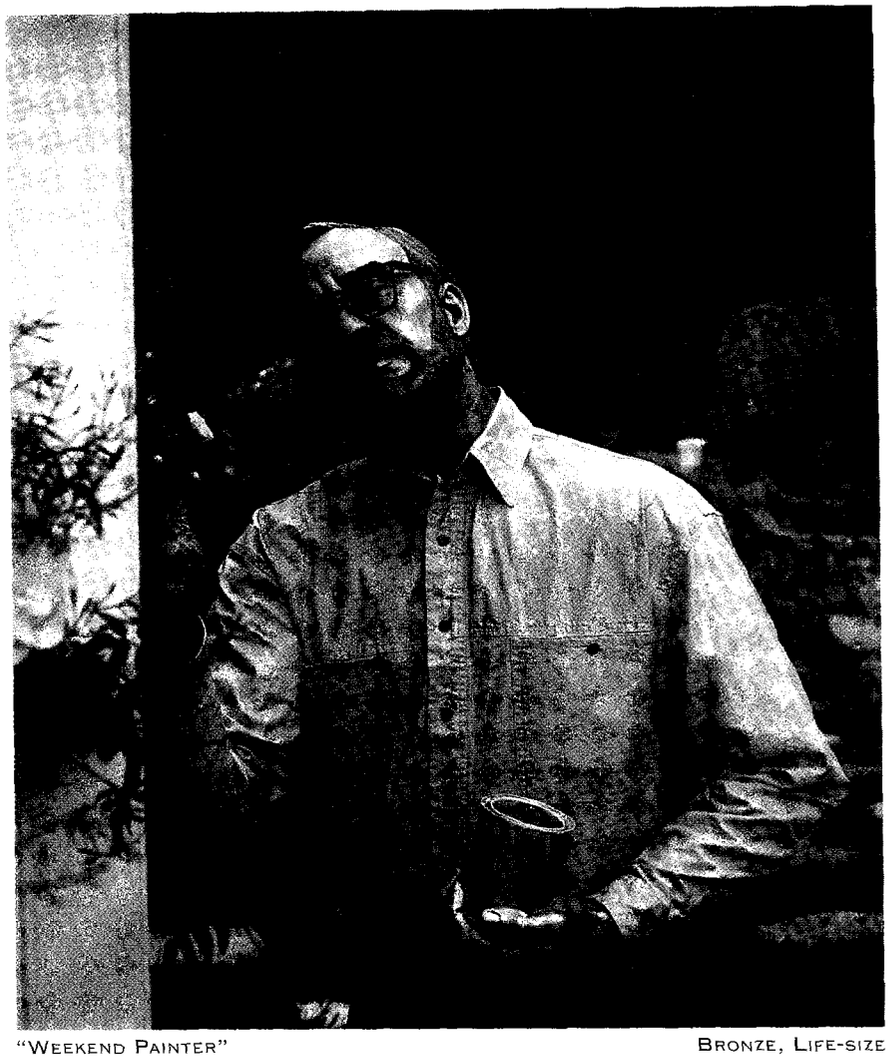

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Fourteen life-size bronze sculptures by J. Seward Johnson, Jr. are currently on exhibition at Le Mirador, on Lake Geneva in Mont Pelerin, Switzerland. This marks the largest European exhibition of Johnson sculptures to date and is the culmination of a tour that has included Madrid, Lisbon, Seville, Luxembourg, Venice, Rome and Milan. For further information pertaining to the scheduling of exhibitions, leasing arrangements or sculpture purchases, please write or call:

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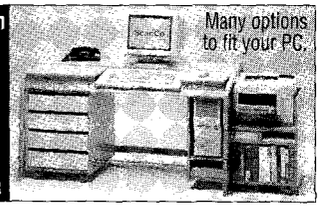

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watched one soldier step through the shards of a grocery window and select a bottle of vodka from the remaining stock, choosing it with the unhurried care of an educated consumer.

On one street corner, two privates from the Seventh Brigade were drinking beer. Each had taken a good deal of trouble with his appearance, in pursuit of the look that Hollywood's Vietnam movies have made the fashion standard for young men with guns. The two soldiers had not shaved for several days and had customized their American-style camouflage fatigues in the appropriate manner—a black T-shirt, a red bandanna tied around the head. One of them wore a gold earring in the shape of an anchor, and the other sported a neck chain. Both were nineteen years old and barely five feet tall. The battle for Knin had been their first combat. "It was a little different from what I expected," the soldier with the earring said. "I didn't expect anything nice, but it wasn't so bad. At first, it was really difficult, because there was a lot of climbing and walking to do, but when we got to Knin it was all right. It really went pretty well. The fight only lasted thirty hours and the Serbs ran."

Across the street, a television crew and several reporters had surrounded an old woman. I walked over. She was a Serb, and the reporters were asking her questions. How many people had been killed in the shelling? Had the Croatian Army mistreated the Serbs? Had there been atrocities? The old woman seemed bewildered. She thought people had been killed in the shelling, but not many on the street where she lived. She didn't know much more. She herself had been treated fine, she said. Nobody had bothered her. "Who is honest does not need to be afraid," she said.

After a few minutes, the reporters drifted off, and the old woman was alone again. I asked if I could talk to her. The fire truck that was cleaning the street was approaching us, washing the avenue from side to side with a hard spray that splashed up a watery brown muck rich with the smell of body fluids. We ducked into a building and moved away from the door, avoiding a pile of human feces in a corner.

She was a short, thick woman with bright-blue eyes, a few yellow teeth, and pure-white hair tucked under a kerchief. Her dirty blue housedress had tiny white polka dots. She told her story in a linear, punctilious manner, going on seamlessly for forty minutes:

"I was born in 1918. I am a poor woman, and all my life has been hard. I was an orphan from an early age. My mother died when I was born, and when I was fifteen months old I lost my father. From that time on, my dead father's brother, my uncle, raised me and my two brothers, here in this city. My two brothers died in 1941, fighting in the war, so I had no one left in my family. But I got married. I was married in a town near here, named Kovacica, in 1940. Then, on April 6, 1941, on the day Belgrade was bombed, my husband went to the war, and he never came back. He was taken prisoner and fell sick.

"He was in a prisoner-of-war camp in Belgrade for a time, with many other sick people, so I knew he was alive. But then he was transferred from Belgrade to another place. And the last letter I got from him was on August 19, 1944. He wrote, 'My health is very bad. I have a high fever and I hope to be transferred in a few days back to Belgrade for treatment.' That was the last letter I got from him. His name was Milan. He knew the Russians were going to liberate Belgrade pretty soon, but he didn't worry. He said, 'I am a sick person, and I have papers as a prisoner of war, and I don't think anyone will harm me.' When the Russians entered Belgrade, the battle lasted five, ten days, and Belgrade was liberated. We all had to stay where we were for three days. You could not go anywhere. As soon as we got freedom of movement, I went to Belgrade to find my husband, but he wasn't there or anywhere else. He was twenty-four. We had been married fourteen months when he went to Belgrade.

"This really bothers me still. I had such a hard life. I was an orphan, and then I lost my brothers, and then I lost my husband. I never knew my parents, and I was always jealous of the other children. But I had a child from my husband, a little girl, and I dedicated my whole life to this little girl. I always felt what misery is, all my life, so I decided if I could not make my life better, I would dedicate myself to making hers better. And that is what I did from then till now, and she has finished the university in Belgrade and she is a professor of philosophy."

Every so often, a reporter would see the woman talking and would come over, but after a minute or two he would leave again, having determined that the woman was saying nothing of news value.

After she finished, she said goodbye and began walking back up the street. She hadn't got more than twenty yards before a cameraman spotted her, and in a moment a crowd of journalists gathered around her again. A Croatian military policeman, a big, tough-looking man, who held his Kalashnikov like a toy, came up and shooed the journalists away. Then he said to her, "Why are you talking to these people? You are not allowed to talk to them. What did you say to them?"

"I only talked about my husband, whom I lost in the war, and my daughter, who is a professor of philosophy," she replied. She walked on, past the television correspondents doing their standups in the sunset light; the photographers and cameramen were still circling around her and the military policeman was following at a menacingly close distance, to make sure she didn't open her mouth again.

It took a while to round up the journalists and get the motorcade in order, and it was dark by the time we left Knin. At an intersection on the edge of town, two freshly torched Serb houses were burning, the flames leaping and licking, in oranges and reds. The soldier directing traffic at the intersection had his back to the fire, and he waved us quickly by. All the way back through the Krajina, we drove by other fires, beautiful in the light of a white three-quarter moon, engulfing houses that had been standing untouched when we drove in that afternoon. ♦

CORRECTION OF THE WEEK

[*From the Guntersville (Ala.) Advertiser-Gleam*]

Opal McCain led the pledge to the flag at the meeting of the Lake Guntersville Homemakers, not the pledge to the flab as we said.

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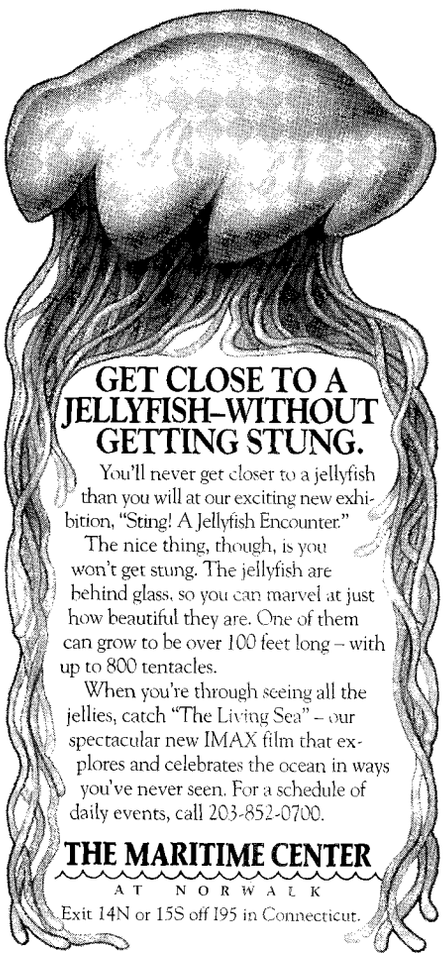

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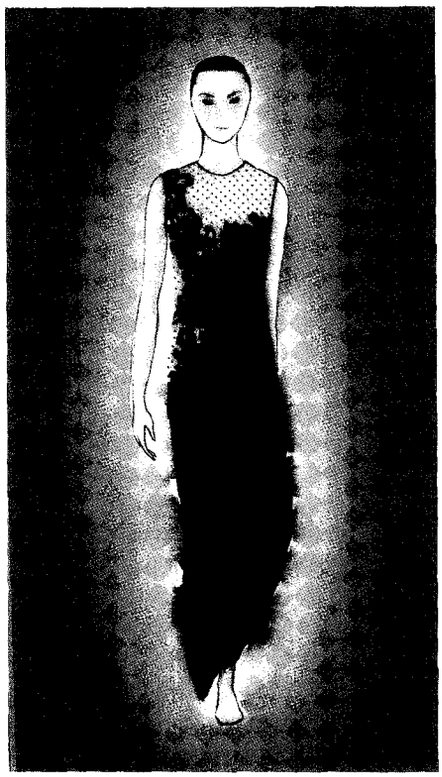
DOWN THE RUNWAY

IRINA RISING

The world of supermodels is perplexing, and all the more so for Irina, the twenty-two-year-old Siberian Inuit who is the very next thing.

BY JAY McINERNEY

WEARING a blue hairnet over rollers, the burnished disk of her round face glowing with fresh makeup atop implausibly long limbs, Irina Pantaeva seems even more like a creature from another planet than usual as she emerges from her vessel—a big rented production van parked on Seventh Avenue—and strolls down the sidewalk, startling the terrestrials. Alighting at one of those Seattle-style coffee beaneries that have sprung up all over the city in the past year, she scrutinizes the bill of fare. "What is . . . *strawberry latte*?" she asks. Troy Word, the photographer, seems at a loss. The hair stylist and the makeup artist also look baffled. How do you explain to a visitor from another world—even if you think you know the answer—what strawberry latte is, let alone *why*?



Irina: "What are 'downtown' people?"

Spending time with Irina can be disconcerting in this manner: you find yourself acting as a reluctant apologist for what suddenly seems an implausible civilization. Less than two years ago, Irina, who is now twenty-two, was living on the other side of the globe—in Siberia, near Lake Baikal, the huge inland sea that contains a fourth of the earth's fresh water. Today, she lives in New York, when she's not in Paris or Milan, and frequently imagines herself to be living in the movie "Funny Face." This spring, she appeared in twenty-two of the New York shows for the fall collections; by the end of the week, the photographers were chanting "Irina" as if it were the name of the home-town team, as if it were already one of those resonant mono-monikers that require no further introduction. Irina, who describes herself as a Siberian Eskimo, is one of the most sought-after new fashion models in years and has recently been chosen to represent that most American of all products—Levi's jeans.

Back in the van after her brush with fruit-flavored coffee products, Irina free-associates about jeans as the hair stylist brushes out her long jet tresses in preparation for today's rooftop shoot. "It is very comfortable and very democratic," she says, looking down at her own Levi's. "It's for rich people and poor people. That's why the country of jeans is America. I remember I always wanted to have them when they first started to show up in Ulan-Ude, when I was fifteen or sixteen. It was really chic to have them. It was really something. The people behaved differently after they had jeans, even then. You can't imagine how much I wanted them. Finally, my mother bought them for me. It was very expensive. It's a nice surprise for me when I got the Levi's account." She pauses, seeming surprised all over again. "Then I understand. What can be more American than a Russian Eskimo? That's why

KAREEM ILLYA

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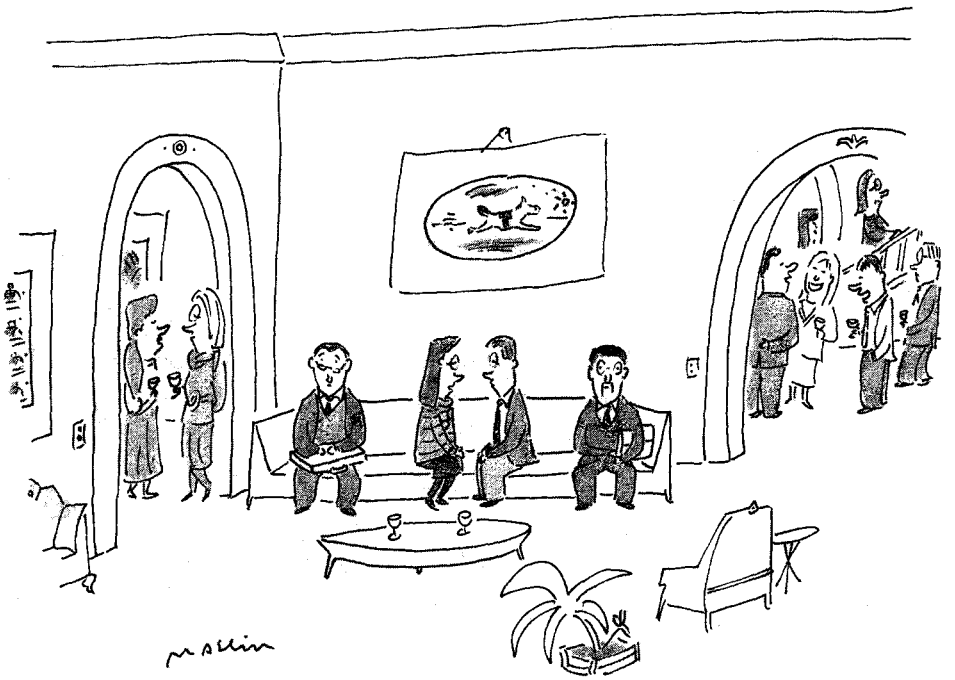

"Well, I suppose we really should be getting back to our attorneys."

• •

I like this country. Because you can be no one and you can become someone."

Today's fashion theme, however, is not democracy but urban sophistication. Sarah Winter, senior fashion editor for British *Marie Claire*, appears from the back of the van to show Irina the fall suits she will be wearing for the shoot: a black-and-white snowstorm tweed from Valentino, very tailored and forties; a houndstooth-check Versace; and a Chanel in Nancy Reagan red. They all look ridiculously great on Irina, who is almost six feet tall. "You can put anything on her and it looks exotic," Sarah says, as Irina tries on the outfits. "There's lots of unusual-looking girls, but very seldom do they come in the right size." Indeed, the contrast of the round face with the long, slender body is startling. Inuits, and Asians generally do not tend to come in this shape. But the visage is almost iconically Asian, like a Noh mask. With its broad planes and rounded edges, Irina's face seems to have already undergone the stylization of art.

Irina is certainly the first Inuit couture star, if not the only Eastern-bloc model to have made a splash in New York in recent years. Troy Word, expressing what might be called the fashion-centric theory of the Cold War, says, "The interesting thing about the fall of the Berlin Wall was that there were all these amazing women over there that we never got to see. And now we have access to them. That's probably why they built the Wall in the first place."

If Irina owes her presence on Western catwalks to the fall of the Evil Empire, her continued success could be said to have much to do with the rise of the Pacific Rim. "She's about to become the first Asian supermodel," claims Ford Models' Katie Ford—and, if she's right, the phenomenon would reflect both a growing American awareness of Asian markets and the new confidence of Japanese advertisers, who used to rely heavily on blue-eyed blondes to push their products. Indeed, the fact that Irina is represented by Ford, the agency that was for years identified with the blond-Nordic-goddess-next-door look, is something of a story in itself.

"WHAT is this—soft . . . shell . . . crab?" Irina asks, or rather shouts. She and her husband, Roland Levin, are dining with two friends at Le Zoo, a frenzied new *boîte* in the West Village. Amid the relatively monochromatic, if boisterous, downtown crowd ("What are 'downtown' people?" Irina asks), Irina is wildly conspicuous in a rainbow-hued sari that Roland has brought back from a recent trip to India, and some shoes with upturned toes which look like something Ali Baba would wear in a Ray Harryhausen movie. (In fact, Irina played a Mongolian princess in the Russian film "The Return of Hajanas Vidim," about an Ali Baba-like figure from Russian folklore.) It's a fashiony crowd tonight; at the next table, people are talking, or trying to talk, about the upcoming menswear shows in New York:

"What?"

"I said can you get me into the John Bartlett show."

"I can't hear you."

"Let's go outside and smoke."

"What?"

Nearby, the singer Ke—another mono-moniker—is celebrating the release of his first CD with a dozen publicist-picked scenesters; an Ecuadorian knit-wool hat is perched on his close-cropped head in defiance of the tropical Manhattan heat.

"Have the soft-shell crab!" Roland shouts back to Irina, reaching over and touching her arm. "It's good!" Both seem a little overwhelmed by the ambient social hysteria. Roland, who grew up in the Soviet Union, is hip enough to know about this place but not quite Manhattanized enough to believe that volume equals fun. Although Irina, having survived some twenty-one Siberian winters and hundreds of SoHo go-sees, is far less fragile than she appears, Roland is protective of his stranger-in-a-strange-land bride. He translates for her when it's necessary, and even when it's not, and frequently touches her arm, as if to reassure her of his presence, or perhaps to reassure himself of her reality.

Roland's almost mournful exile's mien is somewhat at odds with the boldly patterned shirts and jackets he favors. He was born in the Soviet republic of Latvia, in 1956, and in 1973, near the end of his last year in high school, he delivered an extemporaneous speech to some five hundred of his classmates in which he dared to question aspects of the Soviet system and to argue the case for a greater degree of individual choice. His peers gave him a standing ovation, but the directress of the school rose and denounced him as an anti-Soviet menace. A few days later, his father was called to K.G.B. headquarters to explain how he could have raised such a deviate recidivist son. Then Roland himself was

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hauled in and accused of trying to set the school on fire; apparently, someone sneaking a smoke in the cloakroom had singed a couple of coats. His K.G.B. interrogators told him at one point during the seven-hour interrogation that if he would just say his parents had told him to set the school on fire he could walk free. Roland was finally released, in spite of a show of stubborn filial loyalty, and soon applied for an exit visa. Thanks in part to a successful Nixon-Brezhnev summit in Moscow, he was allowed to leave the country in '74. He studied photography in New York, and during the Gorbachev era he began to return to the Soviet Union on assignment for *Newsweek* and other magazines. While shooting in Moscow in 1992, Roland agreed to help a friend coördinate a modelling contest, and, stepping outside the ballroom for some air during the closing-night party, he saw a figure at the far end of the hall. "I was astonished at her beauty," he says. "I wondered where did she come from, because I had never seen her before. I was fighting myself about whether or not to say hello, and finally I said hello."

Irina, who was then eighteen, had been at home in Siberia when she saw a small item in the newspaper about a modelling competition in Moscow. She sent in two pictures and was invited to participate. When she told Roland that night that she was staying at a place with no phone, he feared that she was brushing him off; he was delighted when she kept their appointment to do a test shoot the next morning. After that, he kept postponing his return to the States, staying in Moscow with Irina until his visa expired a month later. Before he returned to New York, Roland arranged for the American consulate to issue an official letter of invitation for Irina to come to America. But when Irina went back to Siberia, the bureaucrats there, who were still trying to absorb perestroika, let alone the baffling new post-Soviet realities emanating from the distant capital, insisted that the letter was invalid.

"So she couldn't come," Roland says. "And I couldn't call. You had to call Moscow first and then wait for an hour to try to get a line to Ulan-Ude, and even then you couldn't get through. We lost touch for two years. Then, in the spring of '94, I was shooting the Anna Sui show in New York, and suddenly there she was on the runway. I couldn't believe it. Of course, she couldn't see me, so after the show I rushed backstage trying to find her." Within a month of their reunion, Roland and Irina were married at City Hall.

WHEN the soft-shell-crab appetizer arrives, Irina regards it with dismay. As a girl, she used to forage in the woods for berries, in order to supplement her bland Soviet diet, and now she has journeyed halfway around the planet to the culinary hot spot of the New York moment only to find what looks like two large fried insects splayed on her plate. "I don't know how to eat this," she says, and decides not to try.

Despite Irina's woman-who-fell-to-Earth demeanor, her touchdown on the runway in Bryant Park a little over a year ago was not quite as abrupt as it appeared to Roland, and Irina perceives a continuity between her new life and her past which might easily escape the rest of us. She views her unlikely ten-thousand-mile journey to the capital of capitalism as the logical extension of her ancestors' nomadic ways. "My people used to travel a lot, and it is in my blood," she says, in a manner at once tentative and serene. "I'm very attractive to—what do you call it?—the unknown." Roland, who often corrects her English, does not do so in this case, as if he suspected that the unknown may indeed find Irina attractive. "In the eighteenth century," she continues, "people from my place, they made a group to go to Moscow to meet with Peter the Great. The strangers were coming to our place to take the land, so our people went all the way from Lake Baikal to Moscow by horses." Roland points out that this is now an eight-hour flight, across five time zones: rather like riding on horseback from New York to Hawaii.

Irina's people undoubtedly received a violent infusion of Mongolian blood from Genghis Khan's invasions. The term "multicultural" barely stretches far enough to cover her immediate family. Her uncle is a lama at the Ivolginsky Datsan, the largest Buddhist monastery in the former Soviet Union. Her grandfather was the shaman of his small Siberian village. "He was the leader of the deers," she says. When you ask Irina what, exactly, it means to be the leader of the deers, she explains, "The people there associ-

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ate themselves with the deer," as if nothing could be more natural, as if to say, "Don't you have an animal here in Manhattan that you identify with?" The reindeer, it turns out, are the totem spirits of the tribe. Although for modelling purposes she has dropped it, Irina's surname, Pantaeva, refers to the antlers of a deer, and she wears silver deer earrings and a deer pendant given to her by her grandmother, who was a fisherwoman on Lake Baikal. As a young woman, she lived in a village not far from her future husband's. Apparently, Granddad spotted her on the tundra somewhere between the two villages and liked what he saw. "One night my grandfather took a horse and rode to another village and stole my grandmother," Irina says. "He put a thing—a hood—over her head and picked her up and rode away. She didn't know where she was. When he brought her home, he said you are going to be my wife. And she said O.K." Irina laughs heartily; she has not yet adopted the tribal politics of Manhattan. When another model asked her recently to sign a petition against fur, she explained patiently that she would have long ago frozen to death *without it.*

Irina's parents both worked at the state-run theatre in Ulan-Ude, a city of some three hundred thousand near the southeast shore of Lake Baikal. Her father had left his ancestral village to attend the music conservatory in the town, and later he went to work as a composer at the theatre, where he met Irina's mother, who worked in the office. When they met, Irina's father, Vladlen, was twenty-three and her mother, Tatiana, was thirty; she had two children by a previous marriage. Irina was born a year later, though her parents neglected to formalize their union until Irina, at the age of sixteen, shamed them into it. ("I said, 'Parents! Why aren't you married?' ")

Late in 1992, after failing to persuade the authorities in Ulan-Ude to give her an American visa, Irina flew to Moscow and then made her way to Paris. She signed up with a modelling agency and was sent almost immediately to Japan, where she made a splash at the Chanel show. But on her return to Paris she found work scarce. She did not quite fit in with the moment—the delayed last gasp of the American grunge look.

That spring, a week before the fall collections were to be shown in New York Irina presented herself at the American Embassy in Paris, determined not to leave until she had a visa. "I had to wait I don't know how many hours," she says. "At last my turn came. There is two windows. At one window is a woman who makes problems for everybody. I get her. She took one look at my passport and said 'Goodbye.' And my English isn't very good. I put all the English words I know together and it was a big mess. It was cinema." This is a favorite trope: Irina often feels as if she were in a movie, which is hardly surprising, considering the high-concept "Nanook" premise and the jump cuts of her life to date. Like a true movie heroine, Irina refused to budge from the consulate until she got her visa.

Smash cut to New York—of which she had formed her only impression via the original version of "King Kong"—where Irina went to Women Model Management, which had briefly represented her in Paris. Within days, she was on the runways, and in April, she modelled several of the shows in Bryant Park—including that Anna Sui show where she was abruptly reunited with her lost lover, whom she had always believed she would find again, if not quite so quickly and effortlessly. Two weeks later, she was doing her first editorial shoot for *Harper's Bazaar*. *Vogue* soon followed. Irina has since done the couture collections in New York, Paris, and Milan, and has worked with top photographers like Stephen Meisel and Irving Penn, though her broad cheekbones have yet to show up on the cover of a major American magazine.

On the sidewalk outside Le Zoo, a debate rages among the fashionable smokers as to whether or not Irina will be a supermodel. George Wayne, the gossip columnist, looking very tropical in a safari outfit and a cheap straw hat, declares her super.

A skinny *Vogue* writer in a cream-colored shift demurs: "She's a trend."

"To be a supermodel, you have to have the big tits and the big hair," says a willowy former Ford model, who has both, "and every man in America needs to want to fuck you." She pauses, takes a drag on her Marlboro, and lowers her Dutch-accented voice. "Naomi's never had a big contract." No one needs to be told that Naomi is Naomi Campbell, or to hear the unspoken explanation: *because she's not white.*

"Well, anyway," says the art director for an Italian design house, returning to the Irina question, "the fashion élite will love her."

THAT great American couture house, the Gap, believes that middle America is ready for Irina. The day of her first encounter with soft-shell crabs finds her posing with nine other models for a campaign with the supershooter Patrick Demarchelier, who is to fashion photography what Christy Turlington is to modelling.

"Where are you, like, from?" one of the five male models asks, probing his geography file for an exotic place name to match Irina's exotic face. "Czechoslovakia?"

Irina laughs, shakes her head. "Farther."

For models, who tend to start working at an age when the rest of us are in high school, the planet can seem to be a dark sphere punctuated by brilliant pinpoints of light labelled Paris, Milan, New York, South Beach, and a movable bright site called "Location." Clearly, Irina is not from any of these places.

The mannequins, all legs and eyes and hair, are lounging on the leather couches at Industria Superstudios, in the West Village. The male model, who looks a great deal like Brad Pitt and is wearing rose-colored John Lennon glasses, squints and rubs his chiselled chin. He studies the broad steppes of Irina's cheeks, with their sprinkling of freckles, for clues. "Yugoslavia?"

Irina seems relieved when she spots Marianna Petrovskaia, a model from Moscow, whom she met in Paris. After Marianna has been outfitted in a pair of prefaded Gap jeans—available in ten shades of blue—the two reminisce about the so-called jeans produced in the former Soviet Union. "Remember the color?" asks Marianna, wincing with distaste. "It was, what do you call it . . . *violetta* . . . violet."

"And they were badly made," recalls Irina. "They were not even straight."

Demarchelier, who has a far thicker

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accent than either of the Russian models, calls out for Irina, who is the star of the shoot today; she is scheduled to appear in several individual shots as well as the big group picture. In her jeans and pinned-back denim work shirt, she slides into a new pose with each click of the shutter, pouring her weight back and forth between long, bedenimed legs. Demarchelier makes several approbatory Gallic noises.

Irina is clearly a natural. In the course of a full week of editorial and advertising sessions, the only time she appears self-conscious in front of the camera is when Roland is behind it, shooting for the Spanish-language newspaper *El Nuevo Dia*. Roland has booked a midtown studio and top hair and makeup people, but somehow he can't seem to get quite what he wants from his wife. Irina is wearing a very complicated Issey Miyake creation—"dress" would be far too mundane a word for what is essentially an interactive package of sleeves and capes and flaps which seems to give the model an opportunity to present an entire fall collection without changing clothes. Irina keeps moving and adjusting the elements without being able to satisfy Roland, who is calling out suggestions in both Russian and English. You can tell that he is acutely aware that Irina was recently photographed in Miyake by Irving Penn, and you can also see how badly Irina wants this to work for Roland's sake. She becomes increasingly less fluid and more self-conscious. Finally, after many false starts, the shoot begins to flow.

From the sidelines, you can't help rooting for them—these two lovers who have come so far, who have so improbably come together. You don't want them to experience the dark side of the great American success story—the second act, in which the supermodel dumps her mentor husband for the next John Casablancas. Roland is aware of a kind of role reversal since he and Irina met in Moscow. Back then, he was a worldly and successful photographer from America, and she was one of thousands of Russian would-be models trying to flee to the West. Now when the phone rings in their apartment—a one-bedroom near Lincoln Center—it is likely to be for Irina.

On being asked if he feels threatened by her success, he inauspiciously quotes from "Star 80," the movie about the ill-fated starlet Dorothy Stratten: "Somebody tells the Eric Roberts character, 'There will always be somebody better-looking than you. All you can do is show her that you love her.' "

The Eric Roberts character, of course, killed his young lover after she bolted for the bright lights. But then, all that Stratten and her sleazy agent husband had in common was Vancouver. Watching Irina and Roland whisper together in a booth at Café Luxembourg, listening to them discuss Bulgakov and Dostoyevski, Soviet food shortages, and the legends of the deer people, you find it possible to believe that this is the kind of old-fashioned Hollywood love story that ends with a slow-dissolve kiss. And maybe at that moment you make a wish for the two of them: that Irina does not go totally supernova on the order of Cindy and Elle and Kate. From the happily-ever-after point of view, it may not be such a bad thing if the dorm-room boys of Iowa and Kansas are not quite ready for an Irina swimsuit calendar.

FOR now, at least, Irina's booker at Ford is speed-dialling to keep up with the demand for her services. After four hours of makeup and hair prep in the *Marie Claire* van, Irina stands on the rooftop of a Seventh Avenue office building, silhouetted against the skyline. In a trim Valentino suit and Manolo Blahnik heels, she appears somehow to be more vertical than the skyscrapers behind her. Troy Word crouches on the asphalt and focusses, and Irina starts to move, stretching one leg out in front of her silhouetted figure until it seems twice as long as the one on which she is balanced. As the photographer begins to shoot, the model from Siberia seems to dance with the towers of Manhattan, creating angular glyphs against the sky with her deerlike limbs. In the first Polaroid, it appears that she is leaning against the Empire State Building.

"It reminds me of a movie," Irina says happily when she sees this test shot. Whether because of the flat light or the vivid girl, the famous skyscraper looks diminutive and insubstantial—like a fake backdrop or a cardboard replica in a still from "Attack of the Asian Supermodels" which is about to topple under Irina's graceful assault. ♦

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE LAST ROMANOV MYSTERY

The bones of the Russian imperial family are at the center of a dispute entangling forensic and DNA experts, the Russian Orthodox Church, and competing politicians. The results of genetic testing expected this month could lead to a remarkable closure: canonization and a state funeral for the former tsar and his family.

BY ROBERT K. MASSIE

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PETER THE GREAT founded two of the preëminent cities of modern Russia. One was St. Petersburg, which he named after his patron saint; its purpose was to give Russia access to the sea. The other was Ekaterinburg, named after his wife, Ekaterina (Catherine), who became his successor and Russia's first sovereign empress. This town in the Urals, just thirty miles east of the border between Europe and Asia, was constructed because of the region's immense mineral wealth. The first ore brought out of the ground was iron; in the eighteenth century, four-fifths of the iron produced in Russia was mined and smelted here. Later, the earth also yielded coal, gold, silver, and other metals in such profusion that Ekaterinburg became rich, famous, and proud. Now a city of nearly a million and a half, it is one of the most important industrial centers of modern Russia. Unhappily, however, all these good things—wealth, fame, civic pride—are overshadowed by a single grim event. For in fact Ekaterinburg will always be famous throughout the world not for its minerals or its industry but for what happened there on the night of July 16-17, 1918.

At around midnight, Yakov Yurovsky, a Bolshevik officer who led a contingent of soldiers holding the imperial

UPI/BETTMANN

Above: Tsar Nicholas II and his family. Their brutalized remains lay in a shallow pit in the forest for over seventy years.

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family prisoner, knocked on the door to the rooms of the Ipatiev House in which the Romanovs had been detained for seventy-eight days. Dr. Eugene Botkin, the family physician, was still awake; he had been writing what turned out to be his last letter. Quietly, Yurovsky explained his intrusion. "Because of unrest in the town, it has become necessary to move the family downstairs," he said. An anti-Bolshevik White Army bolstered by thousands of Czech former prisoners of war was approaching Ekaterinburg. Already, the captives had heard the rumble of artillery in the distance and the sound of revolver shots fired nearby. Yurovsky asked that the family dress as soon as possible. Botkin went to awaken them.

They took forty minutes. Nicholas, fifty, the former emperor, and his thirteen-year-old son, Alexis, the former tsarevich and heir to the throne, dressed in simple military shirts, trousers, boots, and forage caps. Alexandra, forty-six, the former empress, and her daughters, Olga, twenty-two, Tatiana, twenty-one, Marie, nineteen, and Anastasia, seventeen, put on dresses without hats or outer wraps. Yurovsky met them outside their door and led them down the staircase into an inner courtyard. Nicholas followed, carrying his son, who could not walk. Alexis, crippled by hemophilia, was a thin, muscular adolescent weighing eighty pounds, but the Tsar managed without stumbling. A man of medium height, Nicholas had a powerful body, full chest, and strong arms. The Empress, taller than her husband, came next, walking with difficulty because of sciatica, which had kept her lying on a palace chaise longue for many years and in bed or a wheelchair during their imprisonment. Behind came their daughters, two of them carrying small pillows. The youngest daughter, Anastasia, held her pet King Charles spaniel, Jemmy. After the daughters came Dr. Botkin and three others who had remained to share the family's imprisonment: Trupp, Nicholas's valet; Demidova, Alexandra's maid; and Kharitonov, the cook.

Yurovsky detected no signs of hesitation or suspicion, no tears, no sobs, no questions. From the bottom of the stairs, he led them across the courtyard to a semi-basement room. It was only eleven feet by thirteen and had a single window, barred by a heavy iron grille on the outer wall. All the furniture had been removed, so two chairs were brought. Alexandra took one; Nicholas put Alexis in the other. The daughters placed one pillow behind their mother's back and a second behind their brother's. Yurovsky then began giving direc-

Yakov Yurovsky, the chief executioner, left a secret account of how the bodies of the royal party were disposed of.

The bloody murders of the Romanovs to

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RANDOM HOUSE

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ace in the cellar room of the Ipatiev House in Ekaterinburg. The bodies were so badly smashed that identification has been difficult.

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tions—"Please, you stand here, and you here . . . that's it, in a row"—spreading them out across the back wall. He explained that he needed a photograph because people in Moscow were worried that they had escaped. When he was finished, the eleven prisoners were arranged in two rows.

Satisfied with this arrangement, Yurovsky then called in not a photographer with a tripod camera and a black cloth but eleven men armed with revolvers. As they crowded through the double doors behind him, Yurovsky stood in front of Nicholas, his right hand in his trouser pocket, his left holding a small piece of paper from which he began to read: "In view of the fact that your relatives are continuing their attack on Soviet Russia, the Ural Executive Committee has decided to execute you." Nicholas turned to look at his family, then turned back to face Yurovsky and said, "What? What?" Yurovsky quickly repeated what he had said, then jerked a pistol out of his pocket and shot the Tsar, point-blank.

At this, the entire squad began to fire. Each had been told beforehand whom he was to shoot and had been ordered to aim for the heart, to avoid excessive quantities of blood and finish more quickly. Twelve men were now firing pistols, some over the shoulders of those in front, so close that many of the executioners suffered gunpowder burns and were partially deafened. The Empress and her daughter Olga each tried to make the sign of the Cross but did not have time. Alexandra died immediately, sitting in her chair. Olga, Botkin, Trupp, and Kharitonov also died quickly.

Alexis, the three younger sisters, and Demidova remained alive. Bullets fired at the daughters' chests seemed to bounce off, ricocheting around the room like hail. (They wore corsets with diamonds sewed closely into them, which acted as armor.) Mystified, then terrified and almost hysterical, the executioners continued firing. Barely visible through the smoke, Marie and Anastasia pressed against the wall, squatting, covering their heads with their arms until the bullets cut them down. Alexis, lying on the floor, moved his arm to shield himself, then tried to clutch his father's shirt. One of the executioners kicked the Tsarevich in the head with his heavy boot. Alexis moaned. Yurovsky stepped up and fired two shots from his pistol directly into the boy's ear.

Demidova survived the first fusillade. Rather than reload, the executioners took rifles from the next room and pursued her with bayonets. Screaming, running back and forth along the wall, she grabbed a bayonet with both hands, trying to hold it away from her chest. It was dull and at first would not penetrate. When she collapsed, the enraged murderers pierced her body more than thirty times.

The room, filled with smoke and the stench of gunpowder, became quiet. Blood was everywhere. Yurovsky, in a hurry, began turning the bodies over, checking their pulses. A truck now waiting at the front door of the Ipatiev House had to be well out of town before the arrival in a few hours of the July Siberian dawn. Sheets, collected from the beds of the four grand duchesses, were brought to carry the bodies and prevent blood from dripping on the floors and in the courtyard. Nicholas's body went first. Then, suddenly, as one of the daughters was being laid on a sheet, she cried out. With bayonets and rifle butts, the entire band turned on her. In a moment, she was still.

When the family lay in the back of the truck, covered by a tarpaulin, someone discovered Anastasia's small dog, its head crushed by a rifle butt. This little body was tossed into the truck. The "whole procedure," as Yurovsky later described it, had taken twenty minutes.

DURING the Second World War, Ekaterinburg, which had been renamed Sverdlovsk in honor of Yakov Sverdlov, the Party deputy who authorized the imperial massacre on Lenin's behalf, grew from a town to a large city. As the German Army rolled eastward across Russia and the Ukraine, whole factories and thousands of workers were moved behind the Urals. By the end of the war, Sverdlovsk was producing tanks and battlefield Katyusha rockets. After the war, once the Soviet Union acquired the knowledge to build an atomic bomb, secret new towns, ringed by barbed wire and watchtowers, mushroomed near Sverdlovsk and Chelyabinsk, to the south.

During these years, the Ipatiev House became a museum of the Revolution, an antireligious museum, the home of the Council of Atheists Society, the Regional Party Archive, and the Rector's Office of the Ural-Siberian Communist University. Pictures of Bolshevik leaders lined the walls. Posters and diagrams proclaimed the glories of Communism, showing how many more tractors, airplanes, tons of steel, and suits of underwear were made under Stalin than under the Tsar. An upstairs room was devoted to the Romanovs. There were selections from Nicholas's diary, pages of Alexis's diary, and the front page of an Ekaterinburg newspaper with these headlines: "EXECUTION OF NICHOLAS, THE BLOODY CROWNED MURDERER—SHOT WITHOUT BOURGEOIS FORMALITIES BUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR NEW DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES." In the first years, the cellar room was part of the museum; later it became a storeroom, piled to the ceiling with old packing cases.

In 1977, K.G.B. chairman Yuri Andropov convinced Leonid Brezhnev that the Ipatiev House had become a site of pilgrimage for covert monarchists. An order flashed from the Kremlin to the First Secretary of the Sverdlovsk Region, Boris Yeltsin. He was commanded to destroy the Ipatiev House. On the night of July 27th, a giant ball wrecker accompanied by bulldozers arrived in front of the house. By morning, the building, reduced to bricks and stones, had been carried off to the city dump. Subsequently, although Brezhnev and Andropov gave the orders, Yeltsin was blamed for carrying them out. In his autobiography, "Against the Grain," he accepted his share of responsibility: "I can well imagine that sooner or later we will be ashamed of this piece of barbarism."

BY the autumn of 1989, the physical disintegration of the Soviet empire was under way, and on June 12, 1991, the first nationwide election of a political leader in the thousand-year history of Russia took place. Yeltsin was elected President. When he was inaugurated in the Kremlin, on July 10th, he stripped the ceremony of Communist symbolism. In place of the giant portrait of

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Lenin that for decades had loomed behind the speakers' platform, he stretched the white-blue-and-red banner given to Russia by Peter the Great. The patriarch of the Orthodox Church blessed Yeltsin with the sign of the Cross, saying, "By the will of God and the choice of the Russian people, you are bestowed with the highest office in Russia."

Within the year, the Central Committee of the Communist Party had been dissolved. Ukraine, Byelorussia, Kazakhstan, the Baltic states, and other former Soviet republics had proclaimed their independence. In relative peace, seventy-four years of Communist rule in Russia had come to an end. The Communists were expelled from the City Council of Sverdlovsk, and the site of the Ipatiev House, now a vacant lot littered with a rubble of crushed bricks and stones, was turned over to the local Orthodox bishop. There was talk of erecting a chapel. The Union for the Resurrection of Russia, a monarchist group, planted a wooden cross on the site. It was torn down by diehard Communists. Eventually, a six-foot metal cross, decorated with pictures of the Tsar, the Empress, and the Tsarevich, was put in its place. Communists did not lose all their influence in the city once known as the "capital of the Red Urals." The name of the city was changed back to Ekaterinburg, but the name of the region remained Sverdlovsk. The city's main thoroughfare continued to be called Lenin Avenue, and, at a prominent intersection, there remained a statue of Yakov Sverdlov.

After Yeltsin's election, authorities in Ekaterinburg asked the new President's permission to exhume the bones of the Romanovs, which had been located in 1979 by a local geologist and a Moscow filmmaker, although the discovery was kept secret for a decade. Yeltsin nodded yes. A delegation of senior officials went to see Dr. Ludmilla Koryakova, a professor of archeology at the Ural State University, and asked her to help in excavating "an unknown grave from the Soviet period." They refused to be more specific, but Koryakova guessed what was involved. She was reluctant, mostly on scientific grounds. "There was no time to prepare," she later told a journalist. There were "no tools, no instruments, none of the things you really need for a proper excavation." Nevertheless, under pressure from her superiors at the university, she agreed to help.

On July 11, 1991, the day after Yeltsin's inauguration in Moscow, an exhumation party set out for a small clearing in the forest on the former Koptyaki Road about two hundred yards from the Ekaterinburg-Perm railway line. When they arrived, they found the site already under guard. A high, temporary fence had been erected, and, because of a steady rain, a large tent was stretched over the grave. Inside the tent, powerful klieg lights illuminated the ground. Everyone took a spade and began to dig.

The pit was only three and a half to four feet deep; beneath that level, a layer of rock had prevented a deeper hole. The searchers quickly found the box containing three skulls that Alexander Avdonin and Geli Ryabov, the geologist and the filmmaker, had unearthed and reburied for safekeeping eleven years before. It was intact and unchanged. Digging wider, they encountered more skulls, ribs, leg bones, arm bones, vertebrae. The skeletons lay in disarray, on top of one another, at all angles, as if the bodies had been dumped into the pit at random. The bones were various shades of gray and brown; some had a greenish tinge. The fact that they were not more grievously deteriorated was ascribed to the pit's having been dug in clay, which prevented air from reaching the bones. The skeleton at the bottom of the pit was the most thoroughly destroyed. Here the explanation seemed to lie in broken pieces of large ceramic pots with screw-on lids, believed to have contained sulfuric acid. The acid had spread across the clay bottom of the pit, consuming the flesh and damaging the bones it encountered.

The pit revealed no traces of clothing; this was consistent with the ac-

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counts of both Yakov Yurovsky, the chief executioner, and Nicholas Sokolov, who had investigated the case for the White Russians in 1919; both had written that all the victims' clothing had been burned. Fourteen bullets were collected from the grave. Most terrible was the evidence of what had been inflicted on the human beings to whom these skeletons and bones had once belonged. They had been bayonetted, their faces had been smashed in by rifle butts and their jaws broken.

The pit had one final, dramatic revelation, which became apparent only after three days of digging and preliminary assembling of the bones: these remains represented only nine skeletons. Two members of the imperial party were missing. Despite this mystery, on July 18th the authorities announced to the press the discovery of bones that in "great probability" belonged to Tsar Nicholas II, his family, and their servants. Whose bodies were there and whose were not, they said, would be left to further analysis by national and international experts.

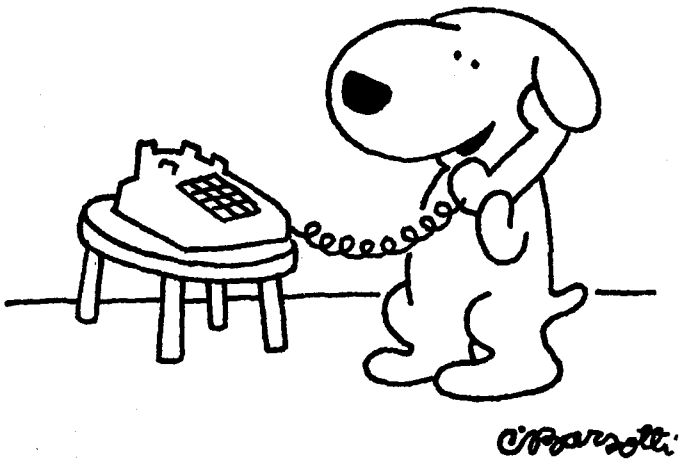
A MONTH after the exhumation of the bodies, Dr. Sergei Abramov, the leading forensic expert in the Ministry of Health, was dispatched to Ekaterinburg. It was a moment of political crisis in Russia. Tanks were moving into Moscow. In Ekaterinburg, Abramov found the remains laid out in separate piles on the floor of the police firing range. They had been labelled by number: Body No. 1, Body No. 2, and so on. Over three months, he painstakingly identified and pieced together seven hundred bones and bits of bone. Much was still missing, and Abramov sent a team back to the grave site to sift and pan the dirt and mud. They found another two hundred and fifty bones and fragments, which Abramov incorporated into the nine skeletons he was assembling. Then he began the task of ascertaining whether this was the imperial family and, if so, which Romanovs were present and which, if any, were absent.

"We had no money, and for that reason any possibility of DNA testing was out of the question," Abramov recalls, looking back on this harrowing chapter of his life. "We decided to determine identity with our own methods. With a video camera, we recorded skulls, front and profile. And then, with the help of a computer program, we matched skull formations to photographs, calculated similarities and probabilities of likeness. Then, in order to compare the people from the grave site with a wider group of people in general, we also taped a control group of a hundred and fifty other skulls. Unfortunately, the equipment we had at that time was very weak technically, and the program that compared domes—the tops of heads—went very slowly. So we were forced to settle for a control group of only sixty skulls.

"No one, ever in the world, used this system before," Abramov declares. "We invented it. *We!* Here in my department, sitting in the next room, is a brilliant mathematician. I told him what I needed. He said it could be done. And he did it! We took four factors: gender, age, race, and height. If we are dealing with a single individual, we prove nothing. With two, we can become a little more certain. With three, we are even more convinced . . . and so forth. And here we have nine. For each of the nine people, there are these four factors. Each of them adds mathematically to the common statistical kettle. When we added all this up, we realized that the possibility of coming across another group of skeletons with this same combination of factors was three multiplied by ten to the minus-fourteenth degree. This turns out to be three incidents in a hundred trillion."

By the summer of 1992, Abramov and his colleagues were convinced that they had found Nicholas, Alexandra, Olga, Tatiana, Anastasia, Dr. Botkin, Demidova, Kharitonov, and Trupp. Alexander Blokhin, deputy vice-governor of the Sverdlovsk Region, announced on June 22nd that "computer modelling comparing old photos of the Tsar and the Empress has definitely proved that the remains found were *their* remains." Everyone agreed that the Tsarevich was missing. And Russian experts accepted Abramov's finding that the ninth skeleton he had examined belonged to the youngest of the Tsar's daughters, Grand Duchess Anastasia. The missing daughter, they believed, was Marie.

A few weeks later, the regional government sponsored a two-day conference, called "The Last Page of the History of the Imperial Family: The Results of Studies of the Ekaterinburg Tragedy." About a hundred people attended, and twenty papers were presented. Alexander Avdonin described how he and Geli Ryabov had found the bones. Professor Krukov, from Moscow, denounced the "rude violations of archeological and forensic norms" involved in the exhumation. Nikolai Nevolin, the director of the Sverdlovsk Region Bureau of Forensic Medicine, analyzed the condition of the bones. Professor Popov, from St. Petersburg, described the damage done to the bones by pistol bullets. Dr. Svetlana Gurtovaya of the chief medical examiner's office in the Ministry of Health described finding pubic hair from Bodies No. 5 and No. 7 and "objects resembling hair" from Body No. 4. All these objects, she reported, "turned out to be extremely fragile and breakable and if they were touched would turn practically to powder." Dr. Abramov described his identification of the family using computer-assisted superimposition. Dr. Filipchuk, from Kiev, ex-



"Oh my, everybody you mentioned would make a great President."

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plained his determination of age, sex, and height obtained by examination of the skulls, long tubular bones, and pelvises of the victims. Some of the speakers were not scientists. One discussed the uniforms worn by Nicholas II as a reflection of his personality. A monarchist from the Russian Nobility Society in Moscow presented himself as the representative of "Their Imperial Highnesses, the Grand Duchess Maria Vladimirovna and the widowed Grand Duchess Leonida Georgievna."

"What are your plans? Are you always going to be like this?"

DR. WILLIAM MAPLES, a forensic anthropologist from the University of Florida, was at the Ekaterinburg conference. Dr. Maples, a balding man in wire-rimmed glasses, is the director of the C. A. Pound Human Identification Laboratory in Gainesville. The Gainesville campus sprawls over several square miles of lush Central Florida landscape. Divided into a grid of streets, it is so large that students sometimes need buses to travel from one class to the next. Some of the blocks in the grid are empty, others almost so. On one of the flat, mostly empty plots, a grove of tall bamboo trees breaks the horizon. A bumpy, rutted driveway turns off the concrete street, leads past an impromptu vegetable garden, and arrives at a high wire fence crowned with rows of coiled barbed wire. Behind the fence, nestled under the bamboo trees, is a windowless, light-green, all-metal building with a number of ventilator pipes on the roof. This is Dr. Maples' laboratory.

The building is not large. The door opens onto a small secretarial office; behind this is Dr. Maples' office. There is a small conference room and a bathroom. And there is the room that Dr. Maples himself designed on a Macintosh computer. No one enters this room without his permission—not that many people would wish to. On the tops of worktables there are human skulls, skeletons, and parts of skeletons awaiting examination. Along the back wall are shelves filled with carefully labelled cardboard boxes containing numerous other human bones. There are computers, X-ray machines, and a video camera; there is a workbench with a drill press, a small anvil, screwdrivers, wrenches, and diamond-blade saws; there are refrigerators and freezers. Along one side wall, there are three large stainless-steel vats, each closed by a transparent plastic odor hood, which is connected to one of the ventilating shafts on the roof. In these vats Dr. Maples and his assistants "macerate remains," which is a euphemism for boiling the meat off the bones.

"It takes a lot of attention to make sure that the soft tissue comes off as quickly as it can," Maples explained. "We have to make sure that the bone isn't softened by being in the water too long and also that the water doesn't boil dry and burn the bone. The hoods protect against splash—with dead bodies, the primary diseases we're concerned with are hepatitis B, AIDS, and tuberculosis—and against odor. It's a very distasteful task, but I can only recall one or two students who have been unable to handle it."

Maples' office, next door, is a relatively cheerful place. It is true that there are eighteen human skulls on top of three large file cabinets, but the cabinets are painted a sprightly orange. Maples' desk lies under a mountain of documents, correspondence, photographs, and X-rays. But William Maples himself is almost exaggeratedly neat. His voice is low, flat, and Texan, reflecting his childhood. His speech, like his methodology, is controlled and precise.

Maples has had a lifelong fascination with death. In college at the University of Texas, where he majored in English and anthropology, he paid for his education by riding in an ambulance owned by a funeral home. Night after night, he hurtled at a hundred and five miles an hour toward accident scenes in order to be there first and get the business. He saw "terrible things," but before he was twenty he had learned to eat a chili-and-cheese hamburger in an autopsy room after watching an autopsy. In 1968, Maples arrived in Gainesville with his Ph.D. and became an assistant professor of anthropology. After six years, he moved out of active teaching to the Anthropology Department of the Florida Museum of Natural History, where he remains a professor.

Maples' field is human bones. By examining the different bones of a skel-

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eton, he usually can quickly tell the sex, the age, and the height of the owner of the skeleton in life. This special knowledge has made him enormously valuable as an expert consultant to local and state police trying to determine the identity of a victim, what happened to the victim at the scene of a crime, and who was responsible. He has also had a number of historical cases, in which there is no client other than history, and the primary motive is the sheer satisfaction of discovering truth and solving a mystery. (It is true, of course, that success in these high-profile cases confers prestige. It is extremely useful to a prosecutor when he can stand before a jury and say to his expert witness, "Are you the same Dr. Maples who . . . ?") In 1984, he proved that mummified remains thought to be those of Francisco Pizarro, the Spanish conquistador assassinated in Lima in 1541, and venerated in a magnificent marble-glass-and-bronze sarcophagus in the Lima Cathedral, actually belonged to someone else. Further, he proved that another set of ancient bones, buried between two layers of wooden planking in the cathedral's crypt, were those of Pizarro. In 1988, Maples examined the skeleton of John Merrick, the nineteenth-century Elephant Man, restored to fame in our time by Broadway and Hollywood. Maples' effort was to establish how much of the grotesquely abnormal growth that disfigured Merrick was the result of soft-tissue tumors and how much was attributable to changes in the structure of his bones. He found that Merrick was afflicted by both. In 1991, he examined the skeleton of Zachary Taylor and proved that the former President of the United States had not been poisoned, as was often alleged, but had probably died of an intestinal infection. And in 1992 Dr. Maples became involved with the Romanov bones.

Secretary of State James Baker had visited Ekaterinburg in February of that year, had been shown the bones, and had been asked for American assistance in identifying them. Maples read about this in the newspaper and organized what he calls "an extremely impressive team." It included Dr. Michael Baden, a forensic pathologist; Dr. Lowell Levine, a forensic dentist; and Cathryn Oakes, a hair-and-fibre specialist.

Maples contacted Alexander Avdonin in Ekaterinburg, and, unknown to Dr. Abramov in Moscow, the Florida team was asked to come in mid-July to spend several days examining the remains, and then to participate in the conference. This effectively bumped a team that had been assembled by the F.B.I. and the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, causing a certain amount of ill will, but Dr. Maples did, indeed, have a powerful team. Dr. Baden, a former chief medical examiner of New York City, had been the chairman of the forensic panel established by the congressional Select Committee on Assassinations to review the murders of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. He was then co-director of the New York State Police Forensic Sciences Unit. Dr. Levine, his co-director, had had an equally celebrated career. He, too, had worked with the Select Committee on the Kennedy and King assassinations. At the request of the State Department, he had gone to Argentina and identified the remains of many of "the disappeared"—men and women who mysteriously vanished under the Argentine military dictatorship. A year later, in Brazil, Levine was instrumental in identifying the teeth and skull of Josef Mengele. Cathryn Oakes, one of the nation's leading hair-and-fibre specialists, was also with the New York State Police Crime Laboratory.

In late July, 1992, Maples and his team arrived at the branch of the Ekaterinburg morgue where the Romanov bones are kept. They were shown to a room eighteen feet by sixteen, about the size of an average American living room. It is a corner room and has two windows, both covered by drawn shades that permit light to enter. The walls are painted a glossy medium green. In the center of the room is a large table, which holds a computer and a microscope. Against the walls on all four sides of the room are metal tables. The bones are laid on these tables in skeletal form; that is, not connected but with the skull at the top, then the vertebrae forming the spinal column, the ribs on either side of the vertebrae, the arm bones outside the ribs, and the pelvic, leg, ankle, and foot bones at the bottom. Maples was horrified to see that some of the long bones of the thigh and arm had been cut into sections; this would only make it more difficult for him to estimate height. When he arrived, the tables were not covered, so that anyone in the room could pick up a bone. Nor was there any temperature control in the room; when Maples and his team were there, in midsummer, the room was warm, and they quickly removed their jackets.

The easiest body to identify—labelled by the Russians as Body No. 7—was that of a middle-aged woman whose ribs showed possible signs of damage from bayonet thrusts. What immediately caught the eye and the attention of Dr. Levine was the elaborate and beautiful dental work in the skull. Two crowns in the lower jaw were made of platinum. Elsewhere in the mouth, there were elegant porcelain crowns and finely wrought gold fillings. Levine and Maples pronounced the skull and the remains as belonging to the Empress Alexandra.

Identifying Nicholas II was also not difficult. The remains labelled Body No. 4 belonged to a fairly short middle-aged man. The hip bones showed the signs of wear and deformation produced by years of riding on horseback, a characteristic activity of Russian tsars. The skull had the wide, sloping forehead, jutting brow, and broad, flat palate possessed by Nicholas. The teeth were extraordinarily bad. The lower jaw showed the inroads of periodontal disease, and there were no fillings in any of the remaining teeth. In the skull, there was no middle to the face; everything below the eye sockets and above the jaw had been obliterated. "We were passing the skull around among ourselves, when we heard something dully rattling inside the braincase," Maples wrote later. "Training a flashlight on the base of the skull, peering in through the aperture where the spinal cord would have been anchored, we descried a small, dried, shrunken object about the size of a small pear, rolling to and fro. It was the desiccated brain of Tsar Nicholas II."

The American team had little difficulty with the four other adults. Body No. 1 was identified by its pelvis as a fully mature female. The skull held a basically prefabricated gold bridge of plain workmanship on the lower left jaw; this was identified as belonging to the maid, Demidova. Body No. 2 was the skeleton

CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT: COURTESY OF RANDOM HOUSE; BETTMANN ARCHIVE; BEINECKE RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY, YALE UNIVERSITY; FASTNEWS/SIPA PRESS

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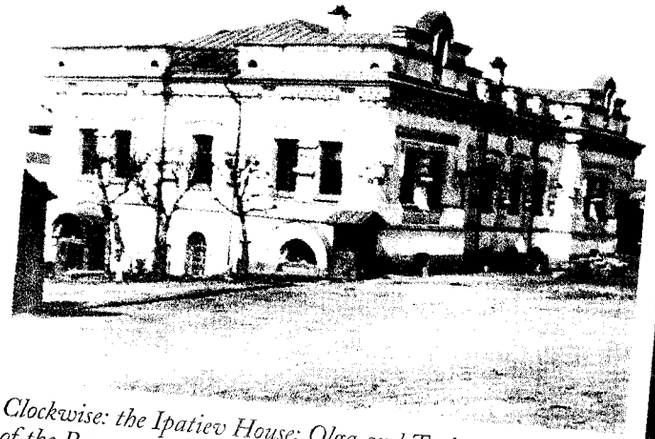

Clockwise: the Ipatiev House; Olga and Tatiana, the eldest of the Romanov daughters; the Empress Alexandra; the skulls of the Empress (left) and two of her daughters. Their DNA matches that of living relatives, including Prince Philip.

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of a large, mature man with a distinct flat, sloping forehead. There were a few teeth in the lower jaw, no teeth at all in the upper jaw. Knowing that Dr. Botkin's dental plate had been found more than seventy years before by the White Russian investigator Nicholas Sokolov helped Maples and Levine to identify these remains as his. Body No. 8 and Body No. 9 were identified as the remains of Kharitonov, the cook, and Trupp, the valet. The skeleton of Kharitonov was the most fragmentary of the nine; having been the first to be flung to the bottom of the pit, his body had lain deepest in the pool of acid. The body of Trupp had rested directly beneath that of the Tsar. As decomposition proceeded, some of the bones became commingled.

The remaining three skeletons, Bodies No. 3, No. 5, and No. 6, were those of three young-adult or near-adult females, all of whom shared with one another, and with Body No. 7 (Empress Alexandra), an uncommon protruding bone structure in the back of the head. This feature, called Wormian bones and found in only five or six per cent of the population, strongly suggested a sibling relationship between the three younger women, and a mother-daughter relationship between the three of them and Body No. 7. The three young women also all had numerous fillings and similar dental work.

The oldest of these young women, Body No. 3, was in her early twenties when she died. Although half of her middle face and her lower jaw were missing, the shape of the head, with its unusually prominent forehead, was similar to that of Grand Duchess Olga. This woman was fully grown; Olga had been twenty-two years and eight months old when she was killed. The leg bones had been cut, but by extrapolating from the lengths of her arm bones Maples estimated her height at just under five feet five inches. Dr. Levine found fully developed roots to the third molars or wisdom teeth, further supporting Maples' opinion that she was a mature adult. The next of the daughters—the remains labelled Body No. 5—had been a woman "in her late teens or early twenties," Maples decided. "Dr. Levine and I agreed that she was the youngest of the five women whose skeletons lay before us." Although half of the middle face was missing, Maples concluded that this skeleton belonged to Grand Duchess Marie, whose nineteenth birthday had occurred three weeks before she died. The third of these young females, whose remains were labelled Body No. 6, had been shot in the back of the head, the bullet entering her skull from the left rear and exiting from her right temple. She had been fully grown, and her dental and skeletal development placed her in age between Bodies No. 3 and No. 5. Maples assigned Body No. 6 to Tatiana.

Dr. Maples was convinced that none of these three skeletons were young enough to have belonged to Anastasia,

BUNNY

In the scarred desk behind me
in history class,
she lulled her nyloned knee
against my ass,

its message pressing home
as dully we went
from the interminable Fall of Rome
to the Council of Trent

and through the even duller
steel-town afternoons
locked in a collar
of dim green rooms,

old nuns, and ever new
bewilderment.
1962.
Like the hood ornament

on some chopped-down hot rod
of the apocalypse,
above the blackboard stood
the crucifix

Flanked on either slope
of this tiny Calvary
by color head shots of the Pope
and John F. Kennedy—

an arrangement meant to convey
not thievery being done
but God's work every day
by the Two Johns

drawing us like dynamos
through them to Heaven
while we shook in our rows
as if on toboggans.

So what if we had known
what J.F.K. was doing
in Laos and Vietnam,
who he was screwing

(including the teen-age mistress
of the head of the Mafia,
delivered to the White House
like a midnight pizza)?

The greater world to me,
present and past,
was the space between Bunny's knee
and my ass,

and I needed it collapsed
as soon as class began.
So what if I thought she had
the brains of a pecan,

mascara so black and thick
she must have smeared it on
with a popsicle stick,
and a nickname incredibly dumb?

Each day when she had helped me
annihilate an hour,
and we were going away,
I'd stare at her,

and she'd stare back and wink
I know you live with it:
one flashlight blink
at the bottom of a pit.

—MICHAEL RYAN

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who had been seventeen years and one month old on the night of the murders. One reason was height. Numerous photographs of Anastasia standing next to her sisters, taken up to a year before her death, showed that she was shorter than Olga and much shorter than Tatiana and Marie. In September of 1917, ten months before the murders, Empress Alexandra wrote in her diary, "Anastasia is very fat, like Marie used to be—big, thickwaisted, tiny feet—I hope she grows more." Could Anastasia have undergone a growth spurt of more than two inches during her final year? It is possible, Maples says, but highly unlikely.

A second reason was the development of the third molars of the three daughters whose remains are present. Dr. Levine, who examined the teeth in every skull, firmly supports Maples' findings. "He did it anthropologically, I did it dentally; then, independently, we wrote down our estimates of the ages," Levine says. "We came up with the same numbers."

Dr. Maples is well aware of the contradiction between his findings and those of Dr. Abramov. "I believe that Anastasia is missing, and he believes that the missing daughter is Marie," he says. "I won't change my mind and he won't change his." Maples faults Abramov's technique in attempting to reconstruct with glue the damaged faces in Ekaterinburg. When Maples' team at one point spoke to Abramov about his efforts to superimpose photographs and skulls and asked the Russian scientist, "What happens if you have landmarks that are missing?" Abramov's answer was "We estimate." This is unacceptable to Maples. On the larger issue, however, Maples agrees absolutely with Abramov that these are the Romanovs. The nine skeletons fit the requirements of age, sex, and height of nine of the prisoners in the Ipatiev House. "If you were to go out at random and try to assemble such a group, to fit such historical descriptions, you would have to be remarkably lucky or do incredible physical examinations to make sure everything fits," Maples asserts. He regards this as so unlikely as to be impossible.

But what happened to the two missing bodies? Maples' long experience with violent death tells him that all eleven prisoners were killed. Given the ferocity of the attack on the family, he cannot believe that anyone was allowed to escape alive from the Ipatiev cellar. For further explanation, he looks to the account of Yakov Yurovsky, which he accepts as truthful. Two days after the murders, according to Yurovsky in a report kept secret until his son turned it over to Geli Ryabov in 1978, the bodies were moved from the mine shaft into which they had been tossed on July 17th. Yurovsky feared that the location of the bodies was about to become known, and he and a group of soldiers moved them to the shallow grave where they were discovered by Ryabov and Alexander Avdonin in 1979. Yurovsky wrote that two of the bodies had been burned above ground near the new burial site, and what remained of them scattered. One of these bodies was that of Alexis, the young Tsarevich; the other was a female body that Yurovsky at first thought belonged to Alexandra, then decided must be that of Demidova. This female body, Maples believes, belonged to Anastasia. But how could Yurovsky have mistaken the body of a seventeen-year-old girl for that of a mature woman, whether forty-six, like the Empress, or forty, like the chambermaid?

The answer, Maples believes, lies in the changes wrought in the appearance of human bodies by decomposition. The imperial family was killed in mid-July, when the daily temperature averaged seventy degrees Fahrenheit. Their faces had been crushed by repeated blows from rifle butts. Their hair, soaked with blood, would have dried into a black, caked, impenetrable mass. As the corpses, stripped of clothing, lay on the ground, the sex of the victims would have been obvious, but beyond that the naked bodies would have bloated to unrecognizability. Maples sometimes sees the bodies of adolescent girls which, a few days after death, have ballooned to resemble those of obese, middle-aged women.

There is more to the process of decomposition. In the open air, flies easily find their way to recent death. They lay eggs in eyes, nostrils, and—as in these victims—in the bloody flesh of mutilated faces and mangled bodies. Within two days at these temperatures, the eggs would have hatched into maggots. No more need be said except that Maples understands why Yurovsky might not have been sure which female body he burned.

THE arrival of Dr. Maples and his American team at the Ekaterinburg conference in 1992 came as a shock to Dr. Abramov and his colleagues from the Ministry of Health. "They didn't know we were there until they walked in the door," Cathryn Oakes says. "And they were not pleased."

"They were shocked," Lowell Levine agrees.

"There was a tug-of-war going on between Moscow and Ekaterinburg,"

"Actually, there's kind of a cute story behind that divorce."

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"It's a guy thing."

• •

Maples explains. "The forensic people in Moscow wanted the remains sent to Moscow. The Ekaterinburg people wanted to keep the remains there. At some point, Ekaterinburg realized that they were going to be outgunned. If they were going to maintain control, they had to have their own forensic team. That's when they made their request to Secretary Baker. As a result, we arrived, and we—without realizing it—became the Ekaterinburg team."

"Professor Maples' participation at the conference in Ekaterinburg was arranged solely by the government of Ekaterinburg," Abramov said later. "We found out by sheer accident. It was strange that Russian experts had not been allowed to photograph and that he was allowed. I don't have anything against Dr. Maples. I respect him greatly. But his role in all this has been puzzling to us. If he is doing the research independently from us, then why are we needed? And if he is doing the research together with us, then why is he hidden from us? We never stood side by side at the bones."

In July of 1993, Maples came back to Ekaterinburg to be filmed examining the bones by "Nova," the PBS science program. On his way home, he stopped briefly in Moscow, and called on Abramov in his office. "Dr. Maples was exhausted," Abramov said. "He had got up at 4 A.M. in Ekaterinburg to fly to Moscow. He had his television people with him; they were taking pictures of us shaking hands." Maples explained to Abramov that his technique of examining and measuring bones proved to him that none of the young female skeletons could be that of a seventeen-year-old. "Then it turned out that he and I were not measuring the same bones," Abramov said. "We measured the femur; he measured the ulna and the radius, which are a much less accurate indication of height. 'But,' Maples said to me, 'you sawed the femur in half.' I said, 'No, we did not do that. Someone else did. But we measured the femur before it was cut. And, frankly, we did not expect any other experts would be coming.' "

During that conversation, Abramov mentioned to Maples a problem regarding the forearm bones about which Maples already was concerned. Speaking of the exhumation process, Abramov said, "These bones easily could have been mixed up between the bodies. And once they were on the tables in the morgue, anybody could pick them up and, by mistake, put them down in another place."

Nikolai Nevolin, who is responsible for the Ekaterinburg morgue in which the bones have rested for four years, has a wry comment on the debate. "Russian scientists believe one way, American scientists believe another," he says. "I believe in a third way. I believe that the argument regarding Marie and Anastasia cannot now be conclusively solved. They were too close in age and were not so very different in height so that forensic experts here or abroad could determine their identity." The ultimate solution, he insists, must be found in the time-honored way: by locating the medical records and comparing teeth, bridges, crowns, fillings, broken bones, and any other skeletal abnormalities with written records and, if possible, X-rays. Like Lowell Levine, Nevolin maintains that the medical records of the imperial family must be somewhere in the archives. "They exist somewhere," he says. "Such documents do not get lost. But so much

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has happened in our country that only the Lord God knows where these documents have ended up. Without a doubt, they will find these medical records. Then it will be possible to determine who was who."

THE seventeenth paper presented at the conference in Ekaterinburg was given by a cheerful, dark-haired, forty-year-old molecular biologist, Dr. Pavel Ivanov, of the Engelhardt Institute of Molecular Biology of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow. Ivanov's subject was DNA testing. He told the conference that Russia's chief medical examiner, Vladislav Plaksin, had asked him to look into the possibility of using this new technique to help identify the Romanov bones. Ivanov knew that the work could not be done in Russia. No one in Russia "had the experience of working with bone materials," he explained to the conference, nor did Russia possess the necessary technology. Nevertheless, while in London in December of 1991, he had visited what he called the "Central Criminal Research Center" of the British Home Office, at Aldermaston in Berkshire, and begun negotiations for a joint British-Russian study of the bones.

Early in July of 1992, just two weeks before the conference, an agreement had been reached between the Russian Ministry of Health and the British Home Office. A joint effort would take place at Aldermaston involving Dr. Peter Gill, director of Biology Research at the Home Office Forensic Science Service, and Dr. Erika Hagelberg, of Cambridge University, a specialist in the molecular-genetic analysis of bone remains. The Russian scientist would be Ivanov himself. The tests in England, Ivanov told his audience, would enable the researchers to determine whether, among the nine exhumed skeletons, a family group existed. Further, if enough uncontaminated DNA could be extracted from the remains, and if living persons descended from blood relations of the imperial family could be persuaded to donate blood samples for comparative purposes, it would be possible to prove whether or not the family group found in the grave was that of Tsar Nicholas II.

The fact that the bones were going to England because DNA technology was not available in their own country was embarrassing for Russian scientists. "We were working on genetic testing at one time," Nikolai Nevolin says with a wry smile. "Academician Vavilov began using this method. Then Mr. Stalin shot his entire team. As a result, we began lagging behind."

Stalin died in 1953. Twenty years later, in the era of Brezhnev, Pavel Ivanov was on his way to acquiring a degree in molecular biology at Moscow State University—"the best we have in Russia, very well regarded in Europe." He began as a pure research scientist, working at the Institute of Molecular Biology on the international Human Genome Project. In 1987, his group, trying to read the genetic codes that create human beings, developed a technique of DNA fingerprinting similar to work first done by Sir Alec Jeffreys in England. Ivanov, still a basic scientist, began to explore and develop this technique. His work came to the attention of "everyday, working" organizations, such as the forensic crime laboratory and the K.G.B. "They expressed interest in practical applications of my work and suggested that I establish a forensic DNA laboratory," he explains. "I agreed, because forensic science was very interesting for me and because, with the level of crime so high in Moscow, I thought I might be able to do something to help. I did not work for the K.G.B.; I have never been a Communist. But I understood the potential of these techniques for combatting crime. Since then, I have had two jobs. I have kept my position as a pure scientist at the Institute of Molecular Biology, and I have also become the DNA adviser to the chief medical examiner of Russia, Dr. Plaksin. Later, when the Romanov case arose, I became the principal Russian DNA investigator by appointment of the Russian state procurator-general.

"I was the one who decided we should go to England when Plaksin asked for my recommendation," Ivanov says. "The F.B.I. laboratory in Washington and the A.F.I.P."—Armed Forces Institute of Pathology—"both do excellent DNA work, but I chose Peter Gill because I knew him and because the British Forensic Science Service had the highest level of expertise in this particular sort of investigation. Also, of course, I already had considered asking Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, to help us. And I knew that he would be much more likely to help if the work were being done in England. But we had to find money. For a Russian scientist today, it is always a question of money. There are no political barriers, but there are financial barriers. You can't go where you want."

On September 15, 1992, Pavel Ivanov boarded a jet in Moscow. With him, in an airline travel bag, carefully wrapped and sealed in polyethylene, he carried pieces of the femurs and tibias of each of the nine skeletons lying on the tables in the Ekaterinburg morgue. At Heathrow, Ivanov was met by Nigel McCrery, a BBC television producer who had been active in the negotiations to bring the bones to England. McCrery, feeling that it was "inappropriate to carry the Russian imperial family in the boot of my Volvo," had hired a Bentley limousine from Co-operative Funeral Services that drove them to Peter Gill's house, where McCrery took photographs to memorialize the occasion. In the morning, Gill and Ivanov carried the bones past the high barbed-wire fences and through the security checkpoints of Britain's huge Ministry of Defence atomic-research facility at Aldermaston. Inside the complex and off to one side, the Forensic Science Service had been given a small building to use as a research laboratory. For the next ten months, the two men and a team of others would attempt to compare and match the DNA of the Ekaterinburg skeletons with one another and with that of living relatives of the murdered Russian imperial family.

DR. PETER GILL is a slightly built man in his early forties, about five feet nine, with a pale face, uncombed hair, a brown mustache, and watchful eyes behind thick spectacles. He owns a dark-blue suit, which he wears for press conferences, but in and around his laboratory his typical dress is a tattered sweater, shapeless corduroys, and elderly loafers. Gill, who was born in Essex, did an undergraduate degree in zoology at Bristol University, received a doctorate in genetics from Liverpool University, and did a five-year postdoctoral fellow-

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ship in genetics at Nottingham University. In 1982, he joined the Forensic Science Service research laboratory at Aldermaston to work on forensic applications of conventional blood-typing methods. In 1985, against strong opposition in the service, he began to study the utility of DNA profiling in forensic science. Aware of the significance of Alec Jeffreys' pioneering work, he briefly joined Jeffreys' laboratory and, that same year, co-authored with Jeffreys the first scientific paper that demonstrated that DNA profiling could be used in forensic science. The methods described in this paper are now routinely used around the world. Gill himself has published approximately seventy papers in professional journals.

Although he is shy and speaks cautiously with strangers, there is one point on which Dr. Gill is quietly emphatic: his laboratory is the best of its kind in the world. ("We have retained our world lead" is his way of putting it.) In his opinion, therefore, it was entirely understandable that Pavel Ivanov had wished to bring the Russian bones to Aldermaston. "Ivanov asked me some time ago whether we'd be interested in carrying out these tests," Gill says. "When he asked, I had to go through the Home Office. They considered all the political ramifications, and eventually we got the go-ahead."

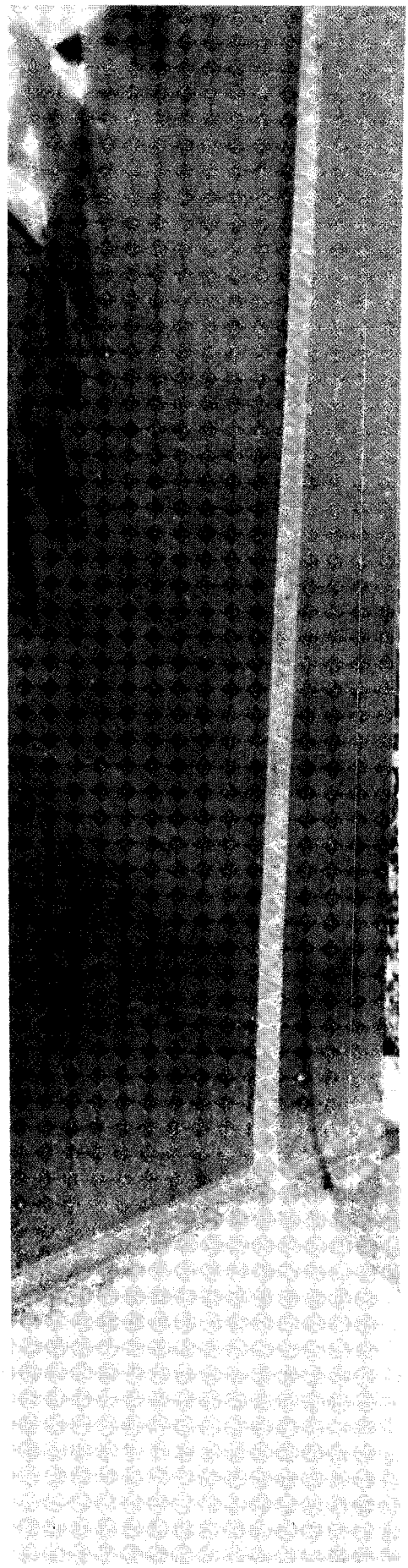
There were political ramifications on many levels. The most obvious was the current relationship between John Major's Conservative Government and Boris Yeltsin's Presidency. Both parties were interested in bringing to fruition a long-suspended diplomatic project: a visit to Russia by the Queen. No British monarch had visited Russia since 1908, when King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra came by yacht to Tallinn (then Reval) to visit Tsar Nicholas II and Empress Alexandra. Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin both had invited the Queen to come, and Her Majesty and the British Foreign Office wanted the visit to take place.

But first there was some unfinished historical and family business. The Russian imperial family and the British royal family were closely related. King George V, Elizabeth II's grandfather, was Nicholas II's first cousin. Indeed, so close was the physical resemblance between the cousins that at George's wedding Nicholas often was mistaken for the groom. King George also was a first cousin of Empress Alexandra. In the spring of 1917, after the Tsar had abdicated and while Alexander Kerensky and the Provisional Russian government were trying to provide for the safety of the imperial family by sending them into political asylum abroad, George V at first welcomed a proposal that Britain bring his Russian cousins to safety by ship. Then the King—fearing that the former Tsar's unpopularity in Britain would tarnish the British monarchy—reversed himself and insisted that they not be brought. George V's act helped doom Nicholas, his wife, and their five children. When the British door slammed shut, Kerensky sent the family to Siberia, hoping to put them out of reach of the Bolsheviks. They were still there when, six months after Kerensky's fall, Lenin's long arm reached out.

For three-quarters of a century, many Russians have regarded England with deep suspicion and resentment. The British royal family is aware of this hostility. Over the years, palace officials have attempted to bury the King's role in the Romanov tragedy; official biographers of George V were advised that they should "omit things and incidents which were discreditable." In 1992, the possibility that the Romanov bones might come to Britain to be verified by British scientists with the help of British royal persons offered an opportunity to put some of these passionate feelings to rest.

It was decided early on that the Forensic Science Service would ignore the new Thatcherite decree that it charge for services. The F.S.S. spent a large sum of money on the Romanov project. "We did all nine of them, the whole lot," Peter Gill says. "It managed to be expensive." The Home Office F.S.S. accountants funded these costs as pure research.

BECAUSE of the age and deteriorated condition of the Romanov bones, Dr. Gill and Dr. Ivanov faced a task radically more difficult than in any previous DNA-typing examination. In a sterile environment, they began by grinding away one millimetre of the contaminated outer surfaces of the bones with sand wheels attached to a high-speed electric drill. The remaining bone was frozen in liquid nitrogen, then pul-



Nicholas with his son, Alexis. Identification

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remains of the Tsar will almost certainly be confirmed this month, when DNA comparisons on the exhumed body of his brother are completed.

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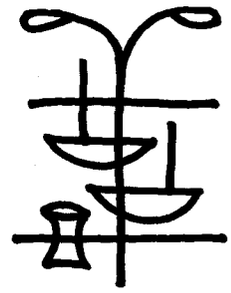
verized to a fine powder and dissolved in various solutions, then centrifuged to release a microscopic quantity of DNA.

Using nuclear DNA, the Aldermaston team first turned to determining the sex of each of the skeletons: there were four males and five females. Next, they tested all nine for a family relationship. The results were what was to be expected if the bones had come from the imperial party, although, Gill's report concluded, "If the remains are those of the Romanovs then . . . test data indicate that one of the princesses and the Tsarevich Alexei were missing from the grave." The adult male presumed to be Nicholas was confirmed to be the father of the three young women. This was as far as Gill and Ivanov could go using the small quantity of degraded nuclear DNA available.



Fortunately, a second form of DNA is available in human cells. Called mitochondrial DNA, it appears plentifully in units outside the nucleus which function as power stations for the cell. Mitochondrial DNA is inherited independently of nuclear DNA, and whereas nuclear DNA is inherited half from the mother, half from the father, mitochondrial DNA is inherited exclusively from the mother. From mother to daughter, it is transmitted intact. "It is like a time machine, going from generation to generation unchanging," Gill says. "The same genetic code would be shared by mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, great-great-grandmother, and so on." At all points in this chain, sons possess mitochondrial DNA received from their mothers, but sons cannot pass this mitochondrial DNA along to their daughters or sons. Thus, as a tool for establishing identity, mitochondrial DNA can be used to identify a woman anywhere in a vertical chain of women descended from one another. And it can identify a son of one of these women. But it cannot continue through the male line; with sons the chain is broken.

Gill and Ivanov extracted mitochondrial DNA from the bone samples brought from Russia. To their delight, the quality of the DNA sequences obtained, Gill and his team reported, "was generally comparable to that produced from fresh blood samples," and the scientists achieved DNA profiles for all nine bone samples. Next, they needed contemporary DNA to make comparisons. The search for living relatives began. In the case of Empress Alexandra, finding a genetically useful living relative was easy. Alexandra's older sister, Princess Victoria of Battenberg, had a daughter, who became Princess Alice of Greece. Princess Alice, in turn, produced four daughters and a son. In 1993, only one of these daughters, Princess Sophie of Hanover, was living. The son was Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and the consort of Queen Elizabeth II. Prince Philip, Empress Alexandra's grandnephew, was perfectly suited for a mitochondrial-DNA comparison with bone material of the murdered Russian Empress, which is why Ivanov had planned on asking him for help. A test tube filled with his blood soon made its way to Aldermaston, and, by November, Gill and Ivanov had results: the match was perfect. Gill and Ivanov were confident that they had located the remains of Alexandra Feodorovna and three of her four daughters.

Confirming the presence of Tsar Nicholas II was far more difficult. The search for DNA material to compare with that extracted from the femur of Body No. 4 was widespread, prolonged, and, in several instances, controversial. The first attempt made by Pavel Ivanov was an approach to the Tsar's only living nephew. In 1916, Nicholas II's younger sister, Grand Duchess Olga, married Colonel Nicholas Kulikovsky, a commoner. With Kulikovsky, Olga had two sons—Tikhon, born in 1917, and Guri, born in 1919. In 1948, Olga and her family moved to Canada, where Kulikovsky bought a farm and raised cattle and pigs. Guri Kulikovsky died, but in 1992, when Gill and Ivanov began their work together, Tikhon, at seventy-five, was living in retirement in Toronto. If the bones from Body No. 4 belonged to Nicholas II, their DNA should match perfectly with DNA from Tikhon Kulikovsky.

Mr. Kulikovsky, however, refused to coöperate. When Ivanov wrote to him, explaining the purposes of the investigation and asking for a blood sample, he received no reply. Ivanov tried again, through Bishop Basil Rodzianko of the Orthodox Church in America, and, finally, through Metropolitan Vitaly, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. Ultimately, Kulikovsky replied to Ivanov. "He told me he believed this whole bones business was a hoax," Ivanov recalled. "He said, 'How can you, a Russian man, be working in England, which was so cruel to the Tsar and to the Russian monarchy?' He said, 'For political reasons, I will never give you a sample of my blood or hair or anything.' " Ivanov was disappointed, but he did not give up. "At that time, it was critical," Ivanov said. "He was the closest relative. I spent a lot of my own money talking with his wife by telephone, assuring them that I was not a K.G.B. agent. And they replied, 'Then probably the only reason for your investigation is to prove that Tikhon Nicholaevich is not of royal blood.' " Ivanov gave up. "O.K., so we forgot about this Tikhon," he said. "And after we published our work, some people wrote that our analysis was not accurate because we didn't use the blood of Tikhon Kulikovsky. The fact is that his blood was no longer necessary. We had found two other relatives who gave us their blood."

Before the other relatives were found, however, Ivanov suggested that a close DNA comparison could be made with Nicholas II's younger brother, Grand Duke George, who died in 1899 of tuberculosis at the age of twenty-eight, and was buried in the mausoleum of the Romanovs, the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, in St. Petersburg. From England, Ivanov contacted Anatoly Sobchak, the mayor of St. Petersburg, and proposed that George be exhumed. "Sobchak protested that it would be too expensive," Ivanov recalls. " 'The tombs in the fortress are made of Italian marble. . . . You must break it. . . . Who will pay for this?' And so on." For eight months, Ivanov persisted, and although at one point Mstislav Rostropovich, the cellist and conductor, who is a friend of Sobchak's, was suggested as a source of financial support, George remained undisturbed.

The Aldermaston genealogists looked again at the family tree. Because the chain of similar mitochondrial DNA is repeated indefinitely down through generations of females, they focussed on the women closest by blood to Tsar Nicho-

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las II. Beginning with his mother, Dowager Empress Marie, they found an unbroken line of five generations of mothers and daughters leading to a contemporary descendant willing to help. The Tsar's sister Grand Duchess Xenia had one daughter, Princess Irina. This Irina married Prince Felix Yussoupov, famous for having murdered Rasputin. Irina and Felix produced one child, a daughter, also named Irina. This second Irina married Count Nicholas Sheremetyev, with whom she had a child, a daughter, Xenia. Upon her marriage, young Countess Xenia Sheremetyev became Xenia Sfiris. Now in her early fifties, Mrs. Sfiris lives in Athens and Paris, and it was in Athens that she received the F.S.S.'s appeal for help. An exuberant, warmhearted woman, she agreed immediately. Following instructions, she pricked her finger, let some blood run onto a paper napkin, where it dried, put the napkin in an envelope, and took it to the British Embassy. From there, it went, via diplomatic pouch, to Aldermaston.

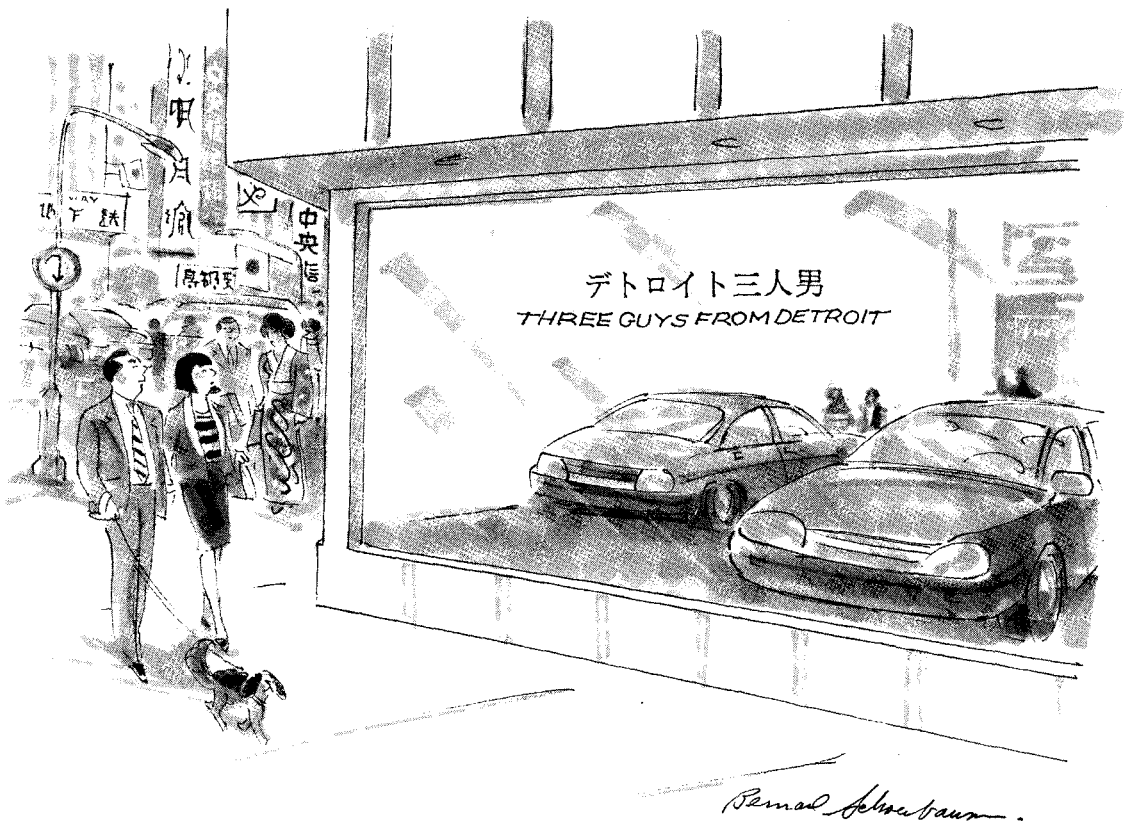
The other donor of DNA material given to identify Nicholas II was found on what must seem an infinitely remote branch of the massive European royal-family tree. Nevertheless, although the line stretched back over five generations, the connection was as reliable and productive as it was in the case of Mrs. Sfiris. James George Alexander Bannerman Carnegie, third Duke of Fife, Earl Macduff, and Lord Carnegie of Kinnaird and Leuchars, is a sixty-five-year-old Scottish nobleman and farmer, who descends from a common female ancestor of Tsar Nicholas II. She was Louise of Hesse-Cassel, a German princess who married King Christian IX of Denmark. One of her daughters became Empress Marie Feodorovna of Russia, the mother of Nicholas II. Another, older daughter, Alexandra, married the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII. Queen Alexandra's daughter Louise married the first Duke of Fife. In 1929, Louise's daughter Maud produced James, who in 1959 succeeded to the title. The Duke was willing to donate blood but, not wishing to incur publicity, made it a condition that he remain anonymous. Inevitably, in the course of time and with an investigation of this significance, knowledge leaked out.

As Gill and Ivanov expected, Xenia Sfiris's mitochondrial DNA matched perfectly with that of the Duke of Fife. But when the DNA of the Greek woman and that of the Scottish peer were compared with the same section in the mitochondrial DNA extracted from the presumed Tsar, there was a mismatch. After further tests, the Aldermaston scientists concluded that Tsar Nicholas II had possessed two forms of mitochondrial DNA, one of which matched his relatives' exactly; the other, at a single point, did not. This rare condition is known as heteroplasmy.

"This complicates the interpretation because the strength of the evidence depends upon whether we accept *a priori* that a mutation has occurred in the Tsar," the Aldermaston report stated. "The probability of a single mutation was calculated . . . to be approximately one in three hundred per generation, but this estimate does not take account of the incidence of heteroplasmy (much of which may be undetected)."

Gill understood that this mismatch raised questions about the validity of his findings. He believed that a mutation had occurred, although he admitted that the odds against it in any given generation were long. "What we did was demonstrate that there are two types of mitochondrial DNA in the Tsar. . . . Bear in mind that we're working right at the frontiers of knowledge. The actual incidence of this type of phenomenon is not really known, and we suspect that it is much more common than originally had been anticipated."

At this point, hoping to reinforce the identification of the Tsar, Ivanov went to see Rostropovich, who was in London. He had a new proposal. Ivanov knew that in 1891 Nicholas II, as tsarevich, had visited Japan. In Otsu, the heir to the Russian throne had been attacked by a sword-wielding Japanese. The blow, aimed at his head, glanced off his forehead, bringing a gush of blood but failing to bite deep. The wound was bound with a handkerchief. For a hundred years, a museum in Otsu had kept the blood-soaked handkerchief in a closed box. For DNA-comparison purposes,



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nothing could provide more accurate positive identity than achieving a match between bone material of unknown origin and blood from a known person. Ivanov was eager to go to Japan, but, as always, "there was no money. The English said, 'Why should we pay for this?' The Russians said, 'We have no money.' " Eventually, Rostropovich arranged for Ivanov's trip. "It was the money we were going to use to dig up George," Ivanov says. "So, instead of George, we did Japan."

The Japanese were not anxious to give up or even disturb the handkerchief, but Rostropovich had spoken to his friend the Emperor of Japan, and the Emperor had spoken to the relevant authorities. When Ivanov arrived, he was permitted to remove and take with him a strip of the handkerchief three inches long and less than an eighth of an inch wide. Unfortunately, back in Gill's laboratory in England, Ivanov ran into difficulties. "The handkerchief had been handled by too many people," he said. "Cells slough off from fingers. There was a lot of blood on the handkerchief, but who knows how much of it was Nicholas's? And there was a lot of dust and dirt. It would be impossible to say that any result you got from that handkerchief was reliable. There were too many other possible contaminants."

In July of 1993, Gill and Ivanov decided to announce to the world the results of their ten months of work. The Aldermaston team said that, given the DNA evidence and adding it to the anthropological and historical evidence provided by others, they were 98.5 per cent certain that these were the Romanovs. This percentage, Gill said, was based on the lowest interpretation of the DNA evidence. A more generous interpretation would increase the probability to ninety-nine per cent. Pavel Ivanov took a broader view of what had been done. "We are very close to the last part of this mystery, to one of the great mysteries of the twentieth century, one of the great mysteries of my country, of Russia," he said.

In February of 1994, Peter Gill, Pavel Ivanov, and others published a description of their work in *Nature Genetics*, one of the most authoritative journals of their profession. Their findings and article have never been challenged or even mildly criticized, in print or orally, by another DNA scientist.

In April of 1993, Dr. Maples and his wife had returned to Siberia, assisted by two airline tickets provided by the American television program "Unsolved Mysteries." In Ekaterinburg, Maples photographed the skeletal remains again, more carefully than he had been able to do on his previous trip. He also removed one tooth from each of the skulls except that of Dr. Botkin, which had few teeth to spare, and that of Kharitonov, which had none. From Botkin and Kharitonov, he took leg-bone fragments. The teeth, he believed, would be far more suitable for accurately identifying the imperial family by DNA testing than the pieces of femur taken to Britain by Pavel Ivanov. Along with these teeth, Maples carried away from Ekaterinburg a decree from the Sverdlovsk regional prosecutor authorizing him to export the bones. Curiously, no one bothered to tell Dr. Vladislav Plaksin, the chief medical examiner of the Russian government, or Pavel Ivanov, then in his seventh month of working with Peter Gill at Aldermaston.

Returning to Florida, Maples held the Russian teeth in his laboratory for six weeks, then "transferred custody" to Lowell Levine, who carried them to California and, in June, gave them to Dr. Mary-Claire King, who held two professorships at the University of California, Berkeley—one in epidemiology in the School of Public Health, the other in genetics in the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology. According to Maples, Dr. King "is the foremost forensic-genetics scientist in the United States and one of the most highly regarded scientists in this field anywhere in the world." And her database for making mitochondrial-DNA comparisons was far larger than that of the British Forensic Science Service. According to Maples, Dr. King's database held mitochondrial-DNA information on a thousand people; Peter Gill and Aldermaston had information on only about three hundred.

William Maples met Peter Gill for the first time in June of 1993, before Gill's press conference announcing identification of the Romanov bones. Maples was in England, preparing for his third visit to Ekaterinburg. From London, Maples and his wife drove to Aldermaston, where they took Peter Gill and Pavel Ivanov to lunch. The lun-

"Is he guilty? Hell, yes, he's guilty. Now can we talk about something else?"

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TRAVEL SLIDES

And this is the sage-silver green of live oaks who shade
the chaparral, and this the dull pea green of shaggy tamarisk,
and this is the pine whose resin once clung to our duffels,
and these are the jade-green bones found deep in the flesh of a fish.
And this is the man who asked: What possible meaning
has hidden beauty in the struggle for existence?
And this is the coral that mimics the mossy antlers of elk,
and this is the coral, you know this, the convolute brain. And this is us,
in one of those fields where, betimes, we find monuments to red:
an iron gate standing free where some road program failed.
And this—this is upside down—can you tell it is the marketplace?
The oranges and eggbreads are local; most everything else imported
in tins and frozen blocks to this sunny principia of cane.
And this is the sea-cliff path, a baking reach where the lava basalt
grated our feet (we should have worn shoes), where fantastic forms
appeared: here the head of a seal, here a window made by the sea to itself.
How rough the lava grows. We should have worn shoes.
And what rubes we must look, as we wince and gingerly probe,
to the snails—the stream of phosphorescent dots—
who are crossing on the softest foot, from one tide pool to another
without complaint—and to the sea with its high threshold of pain.

—EMILY HIESTAND

cheon conversation was polite. There was no discussion about the heteroplasmy that Gill had discovered in Tsar Nicholas II.

Until the meeting at lunch that June, Peter Gill had been only dimly aware of William Maples. Within six months, this situation had radically changed as Maples became the source of a vigorous attack on Gill's findings, on his administrative procedures, even on his competence as a scientist.

Dr. Maples believed that Ekaterinburg, not Moscow, possessed the primary authority to dispose of the Romanov bones, even though when Pavel Ivanov carried the bones to England he did so on behalf of the Russian Ministry of Health and on the specific instructions of the chief medical examiner of the Russian government, Vladislav Plaksin. Dr. Levine had a further complaint. He argued that Gill's announcement of his findings at a press conference in London constituted improper scientific procedure. His report should have gone back to Moscow, "where the Minister of Health is," Levine declared. "Look, if you give me a piece of evidence to analyze for you, my report goes to you. It doesn't go to the New York *Times*, the Washington *Post*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and CNN. A real scientific report goes back to the donor of the evidence, and we would expect you to release the results. That's the way we did it with Mengele. We gave our report to the Brazilians. They said, 'O.K., now we will have a joint conference and release our results.' " Levine's characterization of Gill and Ivanov's public announcement was blunt. "What they did," he said, "was a glory grab."

More serious charges by the Americans struck at the scientific competence of the Aldermaston team. To begin with, Maples questioned whether Gill and Ivanov even used the right bones for their study. "Ivanov used long-bone samples for each of the DNA sources," Maples said. "And, as I personally know, the long bones may not be on the correct table. I used teeth pulled directly from the skulls. There is no problem mixing up the skulls, and the teeth came directly from the sockets of Nicholas, Alexandra, the three daughters, and one of the male servants. Botkin's skull had only a few teeth left in the lower jaw, so I used a long-bone sample from him."

The most critical of Maples' charges against Peter Gill and Pavel Ivanov were levelled against the Aldermaston finding of heteroplasmy in Tsar Nicholas II's mitochondrial DNA, and Gill and Ivanov's statement that they were 98.5 per cent certain that they had identified the bones of the Romanovs.

"They were claiming heteroplasmy in the DNA of Tsar Nicholas," Maples said, "and that, more than likely, is just a contamination of the DNA. It's called shadow banding and is frequently seen. No one, in most circles, interprets that as heteroplasmy."

Baden and Levine shared Maples' opinion. "That's silly," Baden said about Gill's figure of 98.5 per cent certainty. "With DNA, it's either a hundred per cent or it isn't."

IT is difficult to understand the reasons for Maples' attack. Why should a respected forensic anthropologist venture so far outside the field in which he is an acknowledged expert? Assuming a normal regard for scientific accuracy and professional courtesy, how could Maples condemn Gill solely on the basis of a press release and newspaper stories? In conversation, Gill responded vigorously to the two main points of the American attack: that the heteroplasmy found in Tsar Nicholas's mitochondrial DNA was caused by contamination, and that the 98.5-per-cent probability assigned the Aldermaston findings was insufficient, unscientific, or "silly."

"The possibility that contamination occurred is considered highly unlikely," Gill's report stated. "We used two different types of testing. It wasn't just mitochondrial," Gill said. "We used a different method as well, on genomic"—nuclear—"DNA. Yes, we managed to extract nuclear DNA from these samples; they are probably the oldest samples on which this type of DNA testing has ever been carried out. It was very difficult, much more difficult than the work with mitochondrial DNA. But it was crucial in showing that this was a family. We couldn't show paternity—for example, the relationship between the Tsar and the children—on mitochondrial DNA. The only way you can tie in the Tsar is by looking at nuclear DNA." This bears directly on Maples' charge of contamination because, as Gill explained, the nuclear DNA he used came from the same bone segments as the mitochondrial DNA. "If

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there was contamination," he said, "you would have seen it in the Tsar's nuclear as well as his mitochondrial DNA. We didn't see anything like that." Dr. Gill paused, smiled slightly, and said, "This knocks the contamination theory on the head quite nicely."

In addition, Gill continued, Aldermaston verified its findings with a number of backup tests. "We duplicated our findings several times in our own laboratory," he said. Further, as a precaution against precisely the kind of laboratory contamination of which they were accused, Gill and Ivanov sent samples of bone from each of the nine remains to Dr. Erika Hagelberg at Cambridge. Hagelberg is a specialist in the use of polymerase chain-reaction techniques to investigate DNA in ancient, archeologically recovered bones. She used it, for example, to extract DNA from a leg bone of salted pig meat recovered from Henry VIII's warship Mary Rose, which capsized in 1545. Several years after Lowell Levine and other specialists identified the remains of Josef Mengele by forensic means, a German court asked Alec Jeffreys to verify the finding by DNA testing. Jeffreys chose Hagelberg to assist him. Now, in 1993, independently and without knowing the results of the Aldermaston tests, she extracted, amplified, and sequenced DNA from the nine remains in her laboratory. Her results were consistent with Aldermaston's.

Dr. Gill was equally secure about his use of the figure 98.5 per cent to describe his degree of certainty that these were the Romanovs. "We gave an upper [most likely] and lower [least likely] figure," he explained. "We were very cautious. We took the lower figure." The certainty of the identification can be reinforced beyond 98.5 per cent when adding in all the other evidence available, Gill continued. "We have the mother of three daughters; we have the father of the same three daughters. The mother is a relative of Prince Philip. Beyond DNA, you have the anthropological evidence."

Pavel Ivanov, as Gill's principal colleague in the Aldermaston testing, and as the only Russian scientist involved, deeply resented Maples' criticism. A part of Ivanov's indignation was directed at Maples and a part at the Ekaterinburg authorities, who, as Ivanov sees it, abetted Maples' illegal—or, at least, improper—removal of the Romanov teeth from Russia. "Maples was never officially invited by the Russian government," Ivanov says. "'He was invited by the local authorities. There is great jealousy there. It is not a good story, not good at all. It is very much Russia. You know"—Ivanov grew angrier as he spoke—"this is an official investigation. It is a criminal case. This is under the jurisdiction of Russian law. Then Maples arrives, and the local authorities write the law by themselves, for themselves. They just took some bone samples and teeth and gave them to Maples. And he put them in his pocket and carried them through the border. I am a Russian scientist and must have official permission from the general prosecutor to take bone samples to England.

"I thought that I might find out from Maples what was happening, so I called and asked him. He said, 'I'm sorry, but they have asked me not to talk about this until Mary-Claire King has done her analysis.' I wrote two letters to Mary-Claire King asking for her results for discussion. She did not answer. Later, in the autumn of 1993, when I was in Arizona, I telephoned Maples again and asked him to arrange a meeting with Mary-Claire King. Maples gave me her phone number. There was no answer, so I had no possibility of seeing her. But Maples did tell me, 'You know, it is not so interesting. She has done her analysis and confirmed your results.' This is very strange talk from a scientific point of view because it *is* interesting: we used one method; they used another."

The strangest part of the story of William Maples, Mary-Claire King, and the teeth that went to California for DNA testing is that no report ever has been released. King has told Maples that her findings are ready, and in June of 1994, although Maples had not seen King's final report, he did pass along startling information. "Dr. King and Dr. Gill," he said, "both have difficulty in the same area of Tsar Nicholas's mitochondrial DNA." King, Maples said, still needed to resolve whether this difficulty "is a problem of contamination or whether the Tsar had an unusual genetic anomaly"—that is, a heteroplasmy. The possibility of heteroplasmy, of course, was precisely what Peter Gill and Pavel Ivanov had reported eleven months before and what William Maples and his American colleagues had vehemently attacked.

THERE has been a struggle between Moscow and Ekaterinburg for control of the Romanov bones from the beginning, and the dispute between the scientific team supported by the Sverdlovsk regional authorities—Maples' team—and the British DNA investigators authorized by the Russian Ministry of Health was just one symptom. Ekaterinburg regarded the bones as belonging to it, while the Russian government refused to accept the argument that the murder of a Russian emperor and the discovery of his bones are local issues.

During the period of the exhumation and testing for identification, the government's political position was weak. President Yeltsin survived one coup attempt by old-guard Communists and another by the leader of the elected Parliament and his own vice-president. The only central-government officials concerned with the Romanov investigation at this time were in the relatively low-level chief medical examiner's office in the Ministry of Health. The Ekaterinburg authorities were certain that what they were doing had the unofficial support of their native son President Yeltsin, but in August of 1993 the Ekaterinburg monopoly abruptly ended, and the Office of the Public Prosecutor of Russia assumed control of the Romanov investigation. Vladimir Soloviev was assigned as chief investigating official. A Russian government commission was appointed to sit in Moscow. Its assignment was to receive from the Russian public prosecutor all available evidence as to the validity of the bones, weigh this evidence, and then inform the government of its conclusions. If the commission ruled that the remains were legitimate, it was to make further recommendations as to where, when, and by what ritual they should be buried.

When Soloviev assumed control, he immediately designated the investigation of the Romanov murders and the validation of the bones a criminal case—thus giving himself greater powers—and

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he tried to provide the commission with final verification of the identities of the skeletal remains. Although he, personally, accepts the verdict of Russian, English, German, and American scientists that these are the Romanovs, he discovered that some senior officials of both the Patriarchal Church in Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad still had doubts. Both churches continued to be bothered by the heteroplasmy found by Gill and Ivanov in Nicholas II's DNA. Subsequently, Soloviev and the Russian government commission were told unofficially that Dr. King and her colleagues in Berkeley, using the teeth brought to America by Dr. Maples, had confirmed the findings of Gill and Ivanov in England, including the heteroplasmy. But, officially, the commission has received no report from Berkeley. Therefore, the Patriarchal Church, which is considering the canonization of the imperial family, insisted on further testing and hinted that it might withdraw its representative from the government commission unless its request was granted. The commission relented, and Soloviev reactivated Pavel Ivanov's earlier proposal that the remains of Nicholas II's younger brother Grand Duke George be exhumed from the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul in St. Petersburg and the DNA of the two brothers be compared.

George's exhumation took place between July 6 and July 13, 1994. There was difficulty lifting the marble plate over the coffin, but once that was done the body inside was found undisturbed. The upper part of the body was still dressed in superbly preserved clothing; the lower part lay in six inches of water (a reminder that St. Petersburg was built on a swamp, where water is never far beneath the surface of the ground). The scientists removed a piece of the top of the Grand Duke's skull, a part of a leg bone, and seven teeth for DNA testing. Originally, Soloviev had intended to send these fragments to Dr. Gill in England, but when word of this plan leaked out there was, in Soloviev's words, "a lot of yelling and screaming." The result was a series of negotiations with the United States Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, which eventually agreed to perform the tests. "So now we can say that we are handing this examination over to people who are totally independent of us," Soloviev said. "Although our specialist Dr. Ivanov will be there, too."

Pavel Ivanov arrived at the gleaming new Armed Forces Institute of Pathology DNA laboratory, in Rockville, Maryland, on June 5th of this year, bringing with him a section of the femur and tibia of Grand Duke George. Ivanov also brought with him from Moscow two other potentially useful pieces of evidence. One was the strip of bloodstained handkerchief originally obtained in Japan and from which no usable DNA could be extracted in Gill's laboratory. In the A.F.I.P. laboratories, with their special air locks and air-purifying systems designed to reduce laboratory contamination to a minimum, and with the latest equipment for enhancing degraded DNA, Ivanov intended to try again. He also brought with him a strand of Nicholas II's hair, cut when the Tsar was a child of three, preserved in a locket in a St. Petersburg palace, discovered there by Soloviev, and given by him to Ivanov. "There is no follicle attached, and cut hair has very little DNA," Ivanov said, "but the A.F.I.P. has enormously powerful amplification and sequencing equipment. We will do our best."

These DNA tests—on Nicholas II's brother, Nicholas II's blood, and Nicholas II's hair—are to be completed this month.

THE last ceremonial burial of a Russian tsar took place in 1894, when Alexander III, the father of Nicholas II, was interred in the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul. The Tsar died of nephritis in the Crimea at the age of forty-nine. In St. Petersburg, red-and-gold court carriages draped in black waited at the train station for the body and the family. For four hours, the cortège advanced slowly across the city. The only sounds were the beat of muffled drums, the clatter of hooves, the rumble of iron carriage wheels, and the tolling of bells. Sixty-one royal personages, including three kings, arrived to join the family mourners. The ministers of the imperial government, the commanders of the Russian army and navy, the provincial governors, and four hundred and sixty delegates from cities and towns across Russia came to pay their respects. For seventeen days, the body of the Tsar lay exposed in its coffin while tens of thousands of people shuffled past.

A century later, the Russian govern-

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Some experts believe that the bones of Anastasia were in the burial pit. Others think that her body was burned.

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ment commission was completing its findings and recommendations regarding the burial of Nicholas II. The Patriarchal Church, crippled by more than seventy years of compromise with an atheistic state, is still struggling to find a way to deal with the execution of the Romanovs. If the family died as martyrs, then they must be canonized as saints—as, in fact, they were in 1981 by the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. Even if Nicholas and his family are not deemed to merit martyrdom and canonization and are considered simply victims of political assassination, the Church would seem to be obliged to take some notice of their violent deaths.

"We are waiting for the scientists to finish their work," says the playwright and biographer Edvard Radzinsky, who is a member of the commission. "Once the scientists have assured the commission absolutely that these bones are valid, the Patriarchal Church must determine what ritual will be used in the burial service. There is one ritual if Nicholas is to become a saint, another if he is not to become a saint."

Alexander Avdonin, whose discovery of the bones in 1979 started the whole process of identification and reburial, attempted to explain the dilemma confronting the Patriarchal Church. "Unlike the Church Abroad, our Church is located in the country where these events took place," he said. "Here, many people consider that Nicholas II himself was guilty of permitting the Revolution and therefore was at least partly responsible for his own death. If this is true, should he be canonized? How will our people react to this? After all, one must not forget that our people are not thrilled with Nicholas II. Over seventy years, respect for him has been destroyed. The truth is that he was a weak tsar. The fact that he was a good person, a kind man who treated his family well, this cannot take away his guilt for his poor governing of our country. It is a different matter for the others who died with him. They, emphatically, are not guilty. They, indeed, are martyrs."

Avdonin is correct that mixed feelings exist about Nicholas II in contemporary, post-Communist Russia, but his performance as a ruler does not affect the question of his martyrdom. "Martyrdom has nothing to do with the personal actions of a person," Father Vladimir Shishkoff, an archpriest of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, explains. "It only has to do with why and how that person died. In the case of Nicholas II, it is irrelevant what kind of a ruler he was, what he did or did not achieve as tsar. Nicholas became a martyr because he was brutally killed for no other reason than that he was ruler of the country."

ONCE the bones have been scientifically verified, a decision must be made about where to bury them—in Ekaterinburg, where the family was murdered and the bones were found, or in St. Petersburg, the final resting place of Romanov tsars and empresses for nearly three hundred years. Many factors have been considered, including questions of religion and historical tradition, but essentially the decision will be based on sheer political power. Here, St. Petersburg, whose mayor, Anatoly Sobchak, is vice-chairman of the commission and a powerful political ally of Boris Yeltsin, has an overwhelming advantage. But Ekaterinburg, although talk of tourist hotels and restaurant complexes has faded, continues to hope.

None of the surviving Romanovs were asked to sit on the commission discussing the burial of their relatives. The Romanovs communicated their views to President Yeltsin, to the commission, and to the patriarch, but the family's voice was weakened by the fact that it is split; the two branches of the family dislike each other intensely, and each vehemently objects to claims of primacy by the other. The Grand Duchess Maria Vladimirovna, who lives in Madrid and sees herself as the pretender to the throne—on behalf of either herself or her fourteen-year-old son, George—proposed that the remains be divided into three groups: Tsar Nicholas and Empress Alexandra, to be buried with earlier tsars in the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul in St. Petersburg; the three daughters, to be interred among the grand dukes now buried in a vault next to the cathedral; the doctor and the three servants, to be buried in Ekaterinburg.

This proposal shocked Maria's cousins, the numerous Romanov princes and princesses led by Prince Nicholas Romanov, the head of the Romanov Family Association, who lives in Switzerland. "We'd like a proper Christian burial," says Prince Rostislav Romanov, a London investment banker who is a grandnephew of Nicholas II. "And we would like all the people kept together. . . . We just don't want the Russians to start peeling these people off as unimportant. Further, it makes sense to leave them in Ekaterinburg. If you're going to canonize them in martyrdom, why not bury them where they were martyred? If you bury them in St. Petersburg with the other tsars, you're pretending that nothing ever happened. Besides, you could make an awfully good argument that the future of Russia lies in the east, so it would be symbolic."

While the scientists argue, the commission ponders, Church leaders demand additional proof, and the Romanovs bicker, the earthly remains of the last Russian tsar, his wife, three of his daughters, and four faithful Russian followers continue to lie on metal tables in a little room on the second floor of a morgue in Ekaterinburg. Alexander Avdonin cannot understand why this is permitted. "This family was slandered while they lived, then horribly murdered," he said. "For many years, they lay in a pit where cars drove over them. Now they have been brought out. The discovery has tremendous historical meaning. These remains should be the source of unification of our people, who were split by the Revolution. But they still cause division. They could unite the churches—our Church and the Church Abroad—but they do not. They could unite the scientists, but, again, nothing is working out. This is not the way it should be."

Since the exhumation, Avdonin has tried to set aside as a memorial site the place where the bones were discovered. His small foundation, Obreteniye, is dedicated to acquiring the land from the local authorities and then creating a park and a monument. He wants to erect a stone cross, a memorial plaque, and, eventually, when there is money, a chapel. "You understand, their blood and bodies are still right here, part of the soil," he said. He turned and pointed to a place of tossed garbage, churned mud, and pools of dark water. ♦

BETTMANN ARCHIVE

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SKETCHBOOK · BY GERALD SCARFE

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum · Cleveland

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is September 1st on the shores of Lake Erie, and one thing is unmistakable: the heart of rock and roll is now in Cleveland.

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FICTION

CINNAMON SKIN

BY EDMUND WHITE

WHEN I was a kid, I was a Buddhist and an atheist, but I kept making bargains with God: if he'd fulfill a particular wish, I'd agree to believe in him. He always came through, but I still withheld my faith, which shows, perhaps, how unreasonable rationality can be.

One of God's miracles occurred when I was thirteen. I was spending most of that year with my father in Cincinnati; my mother, a psychologist, thought I needed the proximity of a man, even though my father then ignored me and was uninterested in teaching me baseball or tennis, sports in which he excelled. My father and stepmother were going to Mexico for a winter holiday that would not, alas, fall during my Christmas school break, although it was unlikely that he would have invited me even if I had been free, since the divorce agreement specified nothing about winter vacations. One long weekend, I returned to Chicago to see my mother and sister, and fell on my knees beside my bed in the dark and prayed that I'd be invited to come along anyway. The next morning my mother received a telegram from my father asking me to join him in Cincinnati the following day for a three-week car trip to Acapulco. He'd already obtained advance assignments from my teachers; he would supervise my homework.

My mother had a phobia about speaking to my father, and spent thirty-five years without ever hearing his voice. If vocal communication was forbidden, the exchange of cordial but brief tactical notes or telegrams was acceptable, provided it didn't occur regularly. My mother's generation believed in something called *character*, and it was established through self-discipline. Anyway, my mother suggested that I phone my father, since court etiquette prevented her from doing so.

The next day I took the train to Cincinnati; it was the James Whitcomb Riley, named after the Hoosier Poet ("When the frost is on the punkin," one of his odes begins). At the end of each car, there were not scenes of rural Indiana, as one might have expected, but, instead, large reproductions of French Impressionist paintings—hayricks, water lilies, Notre-Dame, mothers and children *en fleurs* . . . This train, which I took twice a month to visit my dad when I was living with my mom, or to visit Mom when I was living with Dad, was the great forcing shed of my imagination: no one knew me; I was free to become anyone. I told one startled neighbor that I was English and in America for the first time, affecting an accent so obviously fabricated and snobbish that it eventually provoked a smile. I told another I had leukemia but was in remission. Another time I said that both my parents had just died in a car crash, and I was going to live with a bachelor uncle. Once I chatted up a handsome young farmer, his face stiff under its burn, his T-shirt incapable of containing the black hair sprouting up from under it; he inspired a tragic opera that I started writing the next week; it was called "Orville."

On this trip, my imagination was busy with a thick guidebook on Mexico I'd checked out of the public library. I read everything I could about Toltecs, Aztecs, and Mayans; but the astrology bored me, as did the bloody attacks and counterattacks, and one century blended into another without a single individual's emerging out of the plumed hordes—until the tragic Montezuma (a new opera subject, even more heartrending than Orville, whose principal attribute had been a smell of Vitalis hair tonic and, more subtly, of starch and ironing, a quality difficult to render musically).

THE year was 1953; my father and stepmother rode in the front of his new, massive Cadillac—shiny pale-blue metal and chrome and, inside, an oiled, dark-blue leather with shag carpet—and I had so much space in the back seat that I could stretch out full length, slightly nauseated from the cigars that my father chain-smoked and his interminable monologues about the difference between stocks and bonds. While in the States, he listened to broadcasts of the news, the stock reports, and sporting events, three forms of impersonal entertainment that I considered to be as tedious as the Toltecs' battles.

I lay in the back seat, knocking my legs together in an agony of unreleased desire. My head filled with vague daydreams, as randomly rotating as the clouds I could see up above through the back window. In those days, the speed limit was higher than now and the roads were just two-lane meanders; there was no radar and no computers, and if a cop stopped us for speeding my father tucked a five-dollar bill under his license and instantly we were urged on our way with a cheerful wave and a "Y'all come back, yuh heah?" My father then resumed his murderous speed, lunging and turning and braking and swearing, and I hid so I wouldn't witness, white-knuckled, the near-disasters. As night fell, the same popular song, the theme song from the film "Moulin Rouge," was played over and over again on station after station, like a flame being passed feebly from torch to torch in a casual marathon.

We stopped in Austin, Texas, to see my grandfather, who was retired and living alone in a small wooden house he rented. He was famous locally for his "nigger" jokes, which he collected in self-published books with titles such as "Let's Laugh," "Senegambian Sizzles," "Folks Are Funny," and "Chocolate Drops from the South," and he made fun of me for saying "Cue" Klux Klan instead of "Koo"—an organization he'd once belonged to, and accepted as a harmless if stern fraternity. He was dull, like

ANDERS WENNGREN

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my father, though my father was different: whereas my grandfather was gregarious but disgustingly self-absorbed, my father was all facts, all business, misanthropic, his racism genial and condescending, though his anti-Semitism was virulent and reeked of hate. He wanted as little contact as possible with other people. And while he liked women, he regarded them as silly and flighty and easy to seduce; they excited men but weren't themselves sexual, although easily tricked into bed. Men he despised, even boys.

My stepmother, Kay, was "cockeyed and harelipped," according to my mother, although the truth was she simply had a lazy eye that wandered in and out of focus and an everted upper lip that rose on one side like Judy Garland's whenever she hit a high note. Kay read constantly, anything at all; she'd put down "Forever Amber" to pick up "War and Peace," trade in "Désirée" for "Madame Bovary," but the next day she couldn't remember a thing about what she'd been reading. My father, who never finished a book, always said, when the subject of literature came up, "You'll have to ask Kay about that. She's the reader in this family." He thought novels were useless, even corrupting; if he caught me reading he'd find me a chore to do, such as raking the lawn.

My father liked long-legged redheads in high heels and short nighties, if his addiction to *Esquire* and its illustrations was any indication, but my stepmother was short and dumpy, like my mother, though less intelligent. She'd been brought up on a farm in northern Ohio by a scrawny father in bib overalls and a pretty, calm, round-faced mother from Pennsylvania Dutch country, who said "mind" for "remember." ("Do you mind that time we went to the caves in Kentucky?") Kay had done well in elocution class, and even now she could recite mindless doggerel with ringing authority—and with the sort of steely diction and hearty projection that are impossible to tune out. She could paint—watercolors of little Japanese maidens all in a row, or kittens or pretty flowers—and her love of art led her to be a volunteer at the art museum, where she worked three hours a week in the gift shop run by the Ladies' Auxiliary. Oh, she had lots of activities and belonged to plenty of clubs—the Ladies' Luncheon Club and the Queen City Club and the Keyboard Club.

Kay had spent her twenties and thirties being a shrewd, feisty office "gal" who let herself be picked up by big bored businessmen out for a few laughs and a roll in the hay with a good sport. She always had a joke or a wisecrack to dish up, she'd learned how to defend herself against a grabby drunk, and she always knew the score. I'm not sure how I acquired this information about her early life. Probably from my mother, who branded Kay a Jezebel, an unattractive woman with secret sexual power, someone like Wallis Simpson. After Kay married my father, however, and moved up a whole lot of social rungs, she pretended to be shocked by the very jokes she used to deliver. She adopted the endearingly dopey manner of the society matron immortalized in Helen E. Hokinson's *New Yorker* cartoons. Dad gave her an expensive watch that dangled upside down from a brooch (so that only Kay could read it), which she pinned to her lapel: a bow of white and yellow gold studded with beautiful lapis lazuli. Her skirts became longer, her voice softer, her hair grayer, and she replaced her native sassiness with an acquired innocence. She'd always been cunning rather than intelligent, but now she appeared to become naïve as well, which in our milieu was a sign of wealth: only rich women were sheltered; only the overprotected were unworldly. As my real mother learned to fend for herself, my stepmother learned to feign incompetence.

Such astute naïveté, of course, was only for public performance. At home, Kay was as crafty as ever. She speculated out loud about other people's motives and pieced together highly unflattering scenarios based on the slimmest evidence. Every act of kindness was considered secretly manipulative, any sign of generosity profoundly selfish. She quizzed me for hours about my mother's finances (turbulent) and love life (usually nonexistent, sometimes disastrous). She was, of course, hoping that Mother would remarry so Dad wouldn't have to pay out the monthly alimony. My sister was disgusted that I'd betray our mother's secrets, but Kay bewitched me. We had few entertainments and spent long, tedious hours together in the stifling Cincinnati summer heat, and I'd been so carefully sworn to silence by my mother that, finally, when one thing came out, I told all. I was thrilled to have a promise to break.

Kay and my father fought all the time. She'd pester him to do something or challenge him over a trivial question of fact until he exploded: "God damn it, Kay, shut your goddam mouth, you don't know what the hell you're talking about, and I don't want to hear one more goddam word out of your mouth! I'm warning you to shut it and shut it now. Got it?"

"Oh, E.*V.*," she wailed (his nickname; his middle name was Valentine), "you don't have to talk to me that way, you're making me sick, physically sick, my heart is pounding, and, look, I'm sweating freely, I'm soaked right through, my underarms are drenched, and you know—my high *blood* pressure." Here she'd break off and begin blubbering. She had only to invoke her blood pressure ("Two hundred and fifty over a hundred and ten," she'd mysteriously confide) in order to win the argument and subdue my red-faced father. I pictured the two of them as thermometers in which the mounting mercury was about to explode through the upper tip. Kay constantly referred to her imminent death, often adding, "Well, I won't be around much longer to irritate you with my remarks, which you find so *stupid* and *ignorant*."

My father filled his big house with Mahler, and played it throughout the night; he went to sleep at dawn. And the more socially successful Kay became the less she conformed to his hours. They scarcely saw each other. During the hot Cincinnati days, while Daddy slept in his air-conditioned room, Kay and I spent the idle hours talking to each other. I bit my nails; she paid me a dollar a nail to let them grow. When they came in, I decided I wanted them longer and longer and shaped like a woman's; Kay promised to cut them as I desired, but each time she tricked me and trimmed them short while I whined my feeble protests: "*C'mon*. I want them long and *pointy*. . . . Kay! You *promised!*" I danced for her in my

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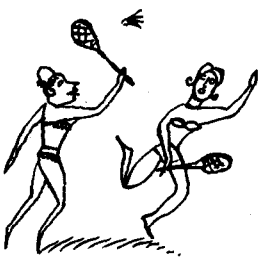
underpants; once I did an elaborate (and very girly) striptease. As I became more and more feminine, she became increasingly masculine. She put one leg up and planted her foot on the chair seat, hugging her knee to her chest as a guy might. I felt I was dancing for a man.

Perhaps she watched me because she was bored and had nothing else to do. Or perhaps she knew these games attached me to her with thrilling, erotic bonds; in the rivalry with my mother for my affections, she was winning.

Or perhaps she got off on me. I remember that she gave me long massages with baby oil as I lay on the Formica kitchen table in my underpants, and I sprang a boner. Her black maid watched us and smiled benignly. Her name was Naomi and she'd worked for Kay one day a week ironing before Kay married; afterward she moved in as a full-time, live-in employee in my father's big house. She knew Kay's earlier incarnation as a roaring girl and no doubt wondered how far she'd go now.



In fact, she went very far. Once when I told her I was constipated she had me mount the Formica table on all fours and administered a hot-water enema out of a blue rubber pear she filled and emptied three times before permitting me to go to the toilet and squirt it out.

My whole family was awash with incestuous desires. When my real mother was drunk (as she was most nights), she'd call out from her bed and beg me to rub her back, then moan with pleasure as I kneaded the cool, sweating dough. My sister was repulsed by our mother's body, but I once walked in on her and my father in his study in Cincinnati. She must have been fourteen or fifteen. She was sitting in a chair and he stood behind her, brushing her long blond hair and quietly crying. (It was the only time I ever saw him cry.) Later she claimed she and Daddy had made love. She said she and I'd done it in an upper berth on the night train from Chicago to Cincinnati once, but I can't quite be sure I remember it.

When I was twelve, Kay was out of town once and Daddy took me to dinner at the Gourmet Room, a glass-walled dome on top of the Terrace Hilton. The restaurant had a mural by Miró and French food. Daddy drank a lot of wine and told me I had my mother's big brown eyes. He said boys my age were rather like girls. He said there wasn't much difference between boys and girls my age. I was thrilled. I tried to be warm and intuitive and seductive.

NOW, as we approached the Mexican border, Kay started teasing me: "I hope you have on very clean underpants, Eddie, because the Mexican police strip-search every tourist and if they find skid marks in your Jockey shorts they may not let you in."

My father thought this was a terrific joke and with his thin-lipped smile nodded slowly and muttered, "She's serious, and she's a hundred per cent right."

Although I worried about my panties, I half hoped that a brown-skinned, mustachioed guard in a sweat-soaked uniform would look into them, and at my frail, naked body: even though I was convinced that I'd never been uglier. I had a brush cut Kay had forced on me ("You'll be hot if you don't get all that old hair out of your face"), and my white scalp showed through it. I wore glasses with enormous black frames and looked like an unappealing quiz kid, without the budding intellectual's redeeming brashness. I was ashamed of my recently acquired height, cracking voice, and first pubic hairs, and I posed in front of the foggy bathroom mirror with a towel turban around my head and my penis pushed back and concealed between my legs. In public, I'd fold into myself like a Swiss Army knife, hoping to occupy as little space as possible.

But at the border the guards merely waved us through after querying my father about the ten cartons of Cuban cigars in the trunk (Dad had to grease a few palms to convince them the cigars were for his own use, not for resale). We drove down the two-lane Pan-American Highway from the Rio Grande through an endless flat cactus desert into the mountains. Kay encouraged me to wave at the tiny, barefoot Indians walking along the highway in their bright costumes, their raven-black hair hanging straight down to their shoulders. Sometimes they'd shake their fists at our retreating fins, but I seemed to be the only one who noticed.

From the highway, we seldom saw villages or even houses, although from time to time we noticed a red flag that had been tossed into the top of a mesquite tree. Daddy said the flag signified that a cow had just been slaughtered. "Since they don't have refrigeration," he informed us through a cloud of cigar smoke, his tiny yellow teeth revealed in a rare smile, "they must sell all the edible parts of the animal and cook them within a few hours." I don't know how he knew that, although he had grown up in Texas, worked summers as a cowboy, and must have known many Mexicans. I was struck by his equanimity in contemplating such shameful poverty, which would have disgusted him had we still been in the States; in Mexico, he smiled benignly at it, as though it were an integral part of a harmonious whole.

My father had a passion for travelling long hours and making record time. He also had ironclad kidneys. Kay had to stop to pee every hour. Perhaps her blood-pressure medicine was a diuretic. "Anyway," she whined, "I don't understand why we have to rush like this. What's the hurry? For Pete's sake, E.*V.*, we're in a foreign country and we should take a gander at it. *No es problema*?"

Before her marriage, when she was still just my father's secretary and "mistress" (my mother's lurid, old-fashioned word), Kay would have said, "For Christ's sake." If she now replaced "Christ" with "Pete," she did so as part of her social beatification. She might actually have said "take a gander" when she was a farm girl in northern Ohio, but now it was placed between gently inverted commas to suggest that she was citing, with mild merriment but without contempt, an endearingly rural but outdated Americanism. Like many English-speaking North Americans, she thought foreign languages were funny, as though no one would ordinarily speak one except as a joke. "*No es problema*?" was her comic contribution to the mishap of being in Mexico, the verbal equivalent of a jumping bean.

HALFWAY to Mexico City we stopped at a beautiful old colonial-style hotel that had what it advertised as

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the world's largest porch, wrapped around it on all four sides. Meek Indian women were eternally on all fours scrubbing tiles the garnet color of fresh scabs still seeping blood. That night, Kay and Dad and I walked past banana trees spotlit orange and yellow and a glowing swimming pool that smelled of sulfur. "*Pee-you*," Kay said, holding her little nose with her swollen, red-nailed fingers.

"It's a sulfur spa, Kay," Dad explained. "The Mexicans think it has curative powers."

We entered a roomy, high-ceilinged cave in which a band was playing sophisticated rumbas. The headwaiter, broad and tall as a wardrobe, wore a double-breasted jacket.

"*Uno* whiskey," Dad said once we were seated, showing off for our benefit. "*Y* two Coca-Cola *por favorita*."

"*Sí, señor!*" the headwaiter shouted before he reclaimed his dignity by palming the order off with lofty disdain on a passing Indian busboy in a collarless blue jacket.

All the other guests at the hotel appeared to be rich Mexicans. No one around us was speaking English. The most attractive couple I'd ever seen were dancing an intricate samba, chatting and smiling to each other casually while their slender hips swivelled into and out of provocative postures, and their small, expensively shod feet shuffled back and forth in a well-rehearsed, syncopated trot.

Daddy was decked out in a pleated jacket with side tabs that opened up to accommodate extra girth; I think it was called a Havana shirt. Suddenly both he and Kay looked impossibly sexless in their pale, perspiring bodies. In my blood the marimbas had lit a crackling fire, a fiery longing for the Mexican couple before me, their bodies expert and sensual, their manner light and sophisticated—a vision of a civilized sexuality I'd never glimpsed before. Outside, however, the heavy sulfur smell somehow suggested an animal in rut, just as the miles of unlit rural night around the cave made me jumpy. There was nowhere to go, and the air was pungent with smoke from hearths and filled with the cry of cocks; in the distance were only the shadowy forms of the mountains.

In Mexico City, we stayed in a nineteen-thirties hotel on the Reforma. There were then only two million people in "México," as the citizens called their beautiful city, with a proud use of synecdoche. People swarmed over our car at each stoplight, proffering lottery tickets, but we kept our windows closed and sailed down the spacious boulevards. We saw the Ciudad Universitaria under construction outside town, with its bold mural by Diego Rivera—a lien on a bright future, a harbinger of progress. We visited the Museum of Modern Art and ate in a French restaurant, Normandie, a few blocks away. We ascended the hill to the fortress castle of Chapultepec, where the Austrian rulers, the lean Maximilian, the pale Carlota, had lived. We were poled in barques through floating gardens and climbed the Aztecs' step pyramids.

We were accompanied everywhere by one of Daddy's business associates and his wife. After I corrected this man ("Not the eighteenth century," I snapped, "that was in the *sixteenth*"), Daddy drew me aside and said, "Never contradict another person like that, especially someone older. Just say 'I may be wrong but I thought I read somewhere . . .' or 'What do I know, but it seems . . .' Got it? Best to let it just go by, but if you must correct him do it that way. And by the way, don't say you *love* things. Women say that. Rather, say you *like* things."

I had always been proud of noticing the fatuous remarks made by adults. Now I was appalled to learn that my father had been vexed by things I said. I was half flattered by his attention (he was looking at me, after all) but also half irritated at how he wanted me to conform to his idea of a man.

We went to Cuernavaca and saw the flower-heavy walls of its mansions, then to Taxco, where Kay bought a very thin silver bracelet worked into interlocking flowers. The heat made her heavy perfume, Shalimar, smell all the stronger; its muskiness competed with my father's cigar smoke. Only I had no smell at all. Daddy warned us to look for tarantulas in our shoes before we put them on.

We arrived at Acapulco, still a chic beach resort, not the paved-over fast-food hellhole it would become, and stayed at the Club de Pesca. I had a room to myself on a floor above my father and Kay's. The manager had delivered baskets of soft and slightly overripe fruit to our rooms; after a day, the pineapple smelled pungent.

One night we went to a restaurant in a hotel on top of a cliff and watched teen-age boys in swimsuits shed their silk capes and kneel before a spotlit statue of the Virgin, then plunge a hundred and fifty feet down into the waves flowing into and out of a chasm. Their timing had to be exact or they'd be dashed

"Newt Gingrich called, but he just wanted to rattle your cage."

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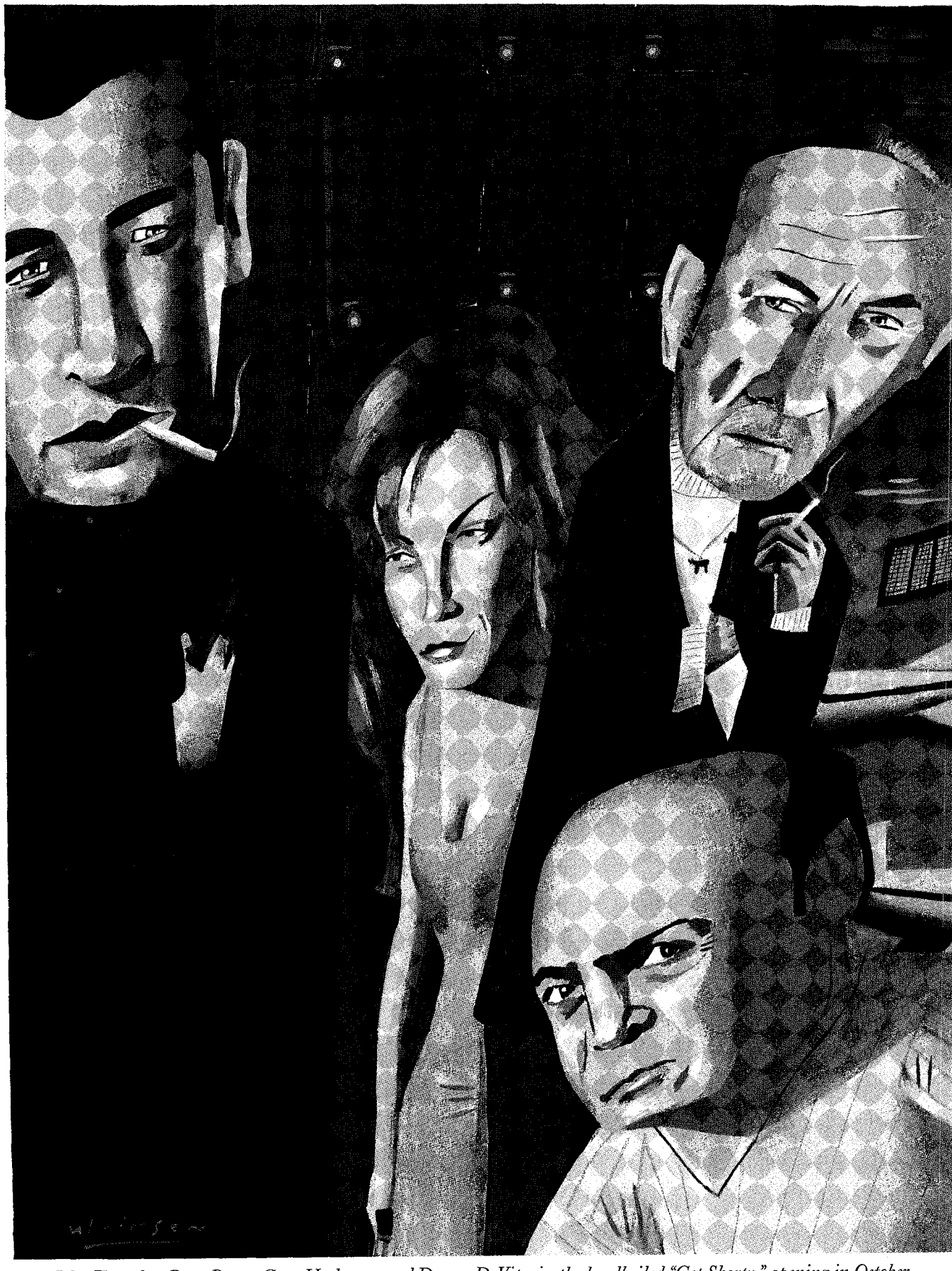
COMING ATTRACTION · BY MARK ULRIKSEN

HOLLYWOOD HUSTLE



John Travolta, Rene Russo, Gene Hackman, and Danny DeVito, in the hardboiled "Get Shorty," opening in October.

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on the rocks. They had superb, muscled bodies, tan skin, glinting religious medals, and long black hair slicked back behind their ears. Afterward, the divers walked among the crowd, passing a hat for coins, their feet huge, their faces pale behind their tans, their haughty smiles at odds with the look of shock in their eyes.

The popular song that year in Mexico was "Piel Canela" ("Cinnamon Skin"), an ode to a beautiful mulatto girl. In the States, reference to color was considered impolite, although everyone told racist jokes in private; here, apparently, a warm brown color was an attribute of beauty. In the afternoons on the beach, young water-ski instructors stretched their long brown arms and legs, adjusting themselves inside their swimsuits, offering to give lessons to pale tourists, both male and female. We gringos had a lot to learn from them.

A SINGER and movie star from Argentina, Libertad Lamarque, was staying in our hotel. When we rode up in the elevator with her, she was wearing a tailored white linen suit and had a clipped, snowy-white Chihuahua on a leash. It turned out that her room was next to mine. I became friendly with her daughter—I don't remember how we met. Although Libertad was in exile from Perón's Argentina, her daughter still lived most of the time in Buenos Aires, where she sang American ballads in a night club. One night she volunteered to sing "You Go to My Head" at the Club de Pesca—yes, that must be how I met her. I went up to congratulate her and was surprised to discover she scarcely spoke English, though she sang it without an accent.

Libertad's daughter must have found me amusing, or perhaps docile, or a convenient alibi for her midday mid-ocean pastimes. She invited me to go out on her speedboat late the next morning; after dropping anchor, she and the handsome Indian driver kissed and embraced for an hour. I didn't know what to do with my eyes, so I watched. The sun was hot but the breeze constant. That night I was so burned Kay had to wrap me in sheets drenched in cold water.

I moaned and turned for two days and nights in wet sheets. A local doctor came and went. My fever soared. In my confused, feverish thoughts I imagined that I'd been burned by the vision of that man and woman clawing at each other on the varnished doors that folded down over the speedboat's powerful motor.

The man who had accompanied Libertad's daughter on the piano was a jowly Indian in his late thirties. Perhaps he smiled at me knowingly or held my hand a second too long when we were introduced, but I honestly can't remember his giving me the slightest sign of being interested in me. And yet I became determined to seduce him. My skin was peeling in strips, like long white gauze, revealing patches of a cooked-shrimp pink underneath. My mirror told me the effect wasn't displeasing; in fact the burn brought out my freckles and gave me a certain raffishness. Perhaps soon I, too, would have cinnamon skin. Until now, I'd resembled a newly shorn sheep.

One night at ten, my well-sauced father, atypically genial, sent me off to bed with a pat on the shoulder. But, instead of undressing and going to sleep, I prepared myself for a midnight sortie. I showered in the tepid water that smelled of chlorine and pressed my wet brush-cut hair flat against my skull. From my chest I coaxed off another strip of dead skin; I felt I was unwinding a mummy. I soaked myself in a cheap aftershave made by Mennen and redolent of the barbershop (witch hazel and limes). I sprinkled the toilet water onto the sheets. I put on a fresh pair of white Jockey underpants and posed in front of the mirror. I rolled the waistband down until it revealed just a tuft of newly sprouting pubic hair. I danced my version of the samba toward the mirror and back again. I wriggled out of my undershorts, turned, and examined my buttocks. I kissed my shoulder, then stood on tiptoe and looked at my chest, belly button, penis.

At last, my watch told me it was midnight. I dressed in shorts and a pale-green shirt and new sandals and headed down toward the bar. My legs looked as long and silky as those of Dad's pinups. I stood beside the piano and stared holes through the musician; I hoped he could smell my aftershave. He didn't glance up at me once, but I felt he was aware of my presence.

He took his break between sets and asked me if I wanted to walk to the end of the dock. When we got there we sat on a high-backed bench, which hid us from view. We looked out across the harbor at the few lights on the farther shore, one of them moving. A one-eyed car or a motor scooter climbed the road and vanished over the crest of a hill. A soft warm breeze blew in over the Pacific.

Some people lived their whole lives beside the restless, changeable motions of the ocean, rocked by warm breezes night and day, their only clothing the merest concession to decency, their bodies constantly licked by water and wind. I who had known the cold Chicago winters, whose nose turned red and hands blue in the arctic temperatures, whose scrotum shrank and feet went numb, who could scarcely guess the gender, much less discern the degree of beauty, under those moving gray haystacks of bonnets, mittens, overcoats, and scarves—here, in Mexico, I felt my body, browned and peeled into purity, expand and relax.

The pianist and I held hands. He said, "I could come up to your room after I get off at four in the morning."

"I'm in Room 612," I said.

I looked over my shoulder and saw my very drunk father weaving his way toward me. When he was halfway out the dock, I stood up and hailed him.

"Hi, Daddy," I said. "I just couldn't sleep. I decided to come down and relax. Do you know Pablo, the pianist from the bar?" I made up the name out of thin air.

"Hello, Pablo." They shook hands. "Now you better get to bed, young man."

"O.K. Good night, Daddy. Good night, Pablo."

Back in my room, I looked at the luminescent dial on my watch as it crept toward two, then three. I had no idea what sex would be like; in truth, I had never thought about it. I just imagined our first embrace would be as though we were in a small wooden boat floating down a river by moonlight. Pablo and I would live here by the sea; I'd learn to make tortillas.

I woke to the sound of shouts in the hall. Oh, no! I'd given Pablo not my room number, 610, but that of Libertad Lamarque, 612. I could hear her angry

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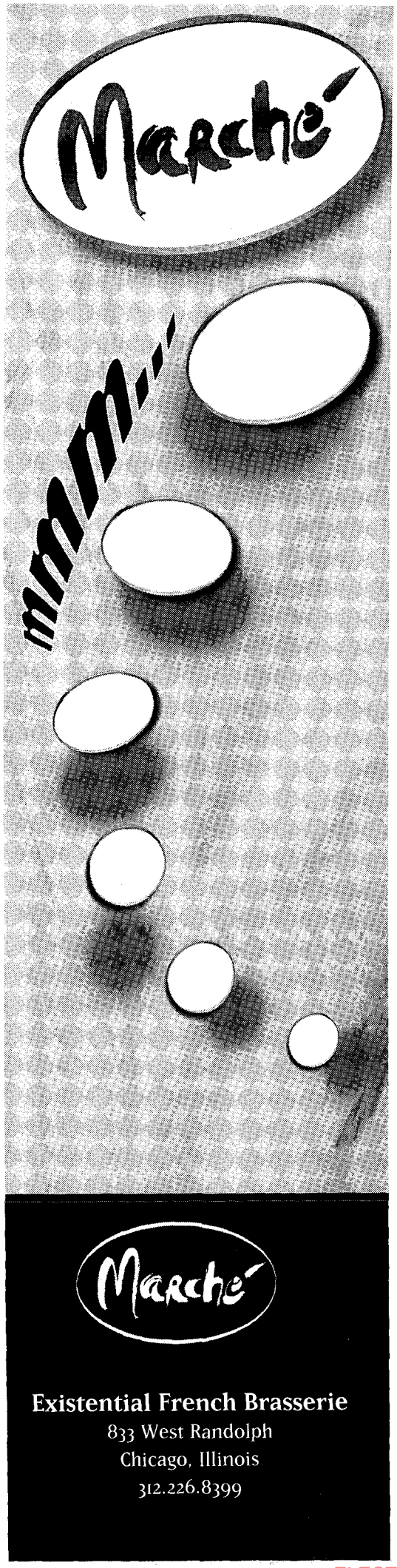

denunciations in Spanish and Pablo's timid murmurs. At last, she slammed her door shut and I opened mine. I hissed for him to come in. He pushed past me, I shut the door, and he whispered curses in Spanish against me. He sat on the edge of the bed, a mountain that had become a volcano. I knelt on the floor before him and looked up with meek eyes, pleading for forgiveness.

I was appalled by the mistake in room numbers. In my fantasies love was easy, a costume drama, a blessed state that required neither skill nor aptitude but was conferred—well, on *me*, simply because I wanted it so much and because, even if I wasn't exactly worthy of it, I would become so once love elected me. Now my hideous error showed me that I wasn't above mishaps and that a condition of cinematic bliss wasn't automatic.

Pablo undressed. He didn't kiss me. He pulled my underpants down, spit on his wide, stubby cock, and pushed it up my ass. He didn't hold me in his arms. My ass hurt like hell. I wondered if I'd get blood or shit on the sheets. He was lying on top of me, pushing my face and chest into the mattress. He plunged in and out. It felt like I was going to shit and I hoped I would be able to hold it in. I was afraid I'd smell and repulse him. He smelled of old sweat. His fat belly felt cold as it pressed against my back. He breathed a bit harder, then abruptly stopped his movements. He pulled out and stood up. He must have ejaculated. It was in me now. He headed for the bathroom, switched on the harsh light, washed his penis in the bowl, and dried it off with one of the two small white towels that the maid brought every day. He had to stand on tiptoe to wash his cock properly in the bowl.

I sat on the edge of the bed and put my underpants back on. The Indian dressed and put one finger to his lips as he pulled open the door and stuck his head out to see if all was clear. Then he was gone.

A couple of years later, when my dad found out I was gay, he said, "It's all your mother's fault, I bet. When did it first happen?" He was obsessed with such technicalities.

"I was with *you*, Daddy," I said, triumphant. "It was in Acapulco that time, with the Indian who played the piano in the Club de Pesca."

A year later, after he'd made another trip with Kay to Acapulco, he told me he'd asked a few questions and learned that the pianist had been caught molesting two young boys in the hotel and had been shot dead by the kids' father, a rich Mexican from Mexico City. I never knew whether the story was true or just a cautionary tale dreamed up by Daddy. Not that he ever had much imagination.

RECENTLY I was in Mexico City to interview Maria Felix, an old Mexican movie star. She kept me waiting a full twenty-four hours while she washed her hair (as she explained). I wandered around the city, still in ruins from a recent earthquake. The beautiful town of two million had grown into a filthy urban sprawl of slums where twenty-four million people now lived and milled around and starved.

I returned to my hotel. My room was on the fifteenth floor of a shoddy tower. I had an overwhelming desire—no, not a desire, a compulsion—to jump from the balcony. It was the closest I ever came to suicide. I sealed the glass doors and drew the curtains, but still I could feel the pull. I left the room, convinced that I'd jump if I stayed there another moment.

I walked and walked, and I cried as I went, my body streaked by passing headlights. I felt that we'd been idiots back then, Dad and Kay and I, but we'd been full of hope and we'd come to a beautiful Art Deco hotel, the Palacio Nacional, and we'd admired the castle in Chapultepec Park and the fashionable people strolling up and down the Reforma. We'd been driving in Daddy's big Cadillac, Kay was outfitted in her wonderfully tailored Hattie Carnegie suit, with the lapel watch Daddy had given her dangling from the braided white and yellow gold brooch studded with lapis lazuli.

Now they were both dead, and the city was dirty and crumbling, and the man I was travelling with was seropositive, and so was I. Mexico's hopes seemed as dashed as mine, and all the goofy innocence of that first thrilling trip abroad had died, my boyhood hopes for love and romance faded, just as the blue in Kay's lapis had lost its intensity year after year, until it ended up as white and small as a blind eye. ♦

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NOVEL THOUGHTS

Four fiction writers with metaphysics on their minds.

BY JOHN UPDIKE

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that the novel, to keep the critical esteem it precariously enjoys, must do more than simply spin its tale and bring us its news. Some overriding message or underlying design should reinforce the narrative, to give it the surplus interest a work of art earns. Jane Austen, in "Northanger Abbey," amplified the dismissive "only a novel" as "only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed." Now that philosophy has become primarily a semantic deconstruction, concerned less with meaning than with the meaninglessness of meaning, the old existential questions find shelter within the novel's traditional—in the enormous, amorphous phrase of Henry James—"direct impression of life." Not that James's own diffuse and circumspect impressions precisely illustrate their discerned morals; "The Ambassadors," for example, in its muffled whole, hardly forms an injunction, as he averred in his preface, to "live, live!" But a moralistic intent quickens the novel as early as "Don Quixote," wherein, however, the clear message "Basing your life upon romances is folly" modulates by the end to the observation "There is a certain beauty and gallantry in such folly."

That many readers are keen to see the novel wax philosophical was demonstrated by the commercial success, especially in Scandinavia and Germany, of Jostein Gaarder's "Sophie's World: A Novel About the History of Philosophy" (translated from the Norwegian by Paulette Møller; Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $19). This entertainingly framed outline of Western thought—for three years at the top of Norway's best-seller list, and translated as far afield as Brazil and Korea—was written by a former Bergen high-school teacher, and concerns the education of fourteen-year-old Sophie Amundsen, who turns fifteen, and comes to terms with her status as a fictional character, by the end of the novel.

She begins to receive interrogative notes—"Who are you?" "Where does the world come from?"—in her mailbox, and then entire lectures, from an anonymous pedagogue, who slowly reveals himself as Alberto Knox, a small bearded man old enough to be her father. As her mother, an ineffectual disciplinarian, correctly points out, there is something creepy about all this, but the adolescent Sophie's passion for more installments of the saga of philosophy sheds all maternal objections. By the time the Middle Ages are reached, she and Alberto are having tutorial sessions face to face, first in an abandoned church and then, as the Renaissance and the Reformation loosen things up, in the man's eclectically furnished, in-town apartment. The tenor of their dialogues is Socratic. That is, one side does all the talking and the other all the agreeing:

> [Sophie asks,] "But what is the point of having a moral law implanted inside yourself if it doesn't tell you what to do in specific situations?"
>
> "Kant formulates the moral law as a *categorical imperative*. By this he means that the moral law is 'categorical,' or that it applies to all situations. It is, moreover, 'imperative,' which means it is commanding and therefore absolutely authoritative."
>
> "I see."

Four hundred pages of this take us from the Norse myths and the world view of Thales up to Marx, Freud, and Jean-Paul Sartre, at which point philosophy comes to "the end of the road" and the ribbon of frame-narrative becomes a Möbius strip, reality and fiction reversing in a Pirandelloesque twist. All sorts of fictive entities—Little Red Riding-Hood, Noah, Adam and Eve, Donald Duck, and Goofy—pop in upon the proceedings. The careful exposition of the West's weightiest thinkers seems undercut by the post-realist confusions of a Midsummer's Eve revel, as all dissolves in starlight. Any pubescent girl or senescent man who goes the route will certainly learn much from this introductory or refresher course in philosophy; but perhaps the book, which has had only a modest American success, fell between marketing stools in this country, as

JOSH GOSFIELD

Clockwise from top left: Richard Powers, Jostein Gaarder, Alain de Botton, and Tibor Fischer.

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too challenging for children and too whimsical for adults. One wonders how many of its copies in Europe were bought as graduation presents for eighteen-year-olds, and remain unread. It is a college-preparatory "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," paternal in tone but in net content rather desolating: a patient parade of what Harold Bloom calls "stuffed parrots," enlivened by up-to-date asides urging female equality and U.N. peace-keeping. The novelistic part, the frame containing Sophie and Alberto and their real-life doppelgängers, Hilde Knag and her father, Albert, tells us little about Norwegian life except that fourteen-year-old girls are very fond of their fathers, who are rarely at home.

SOPHIE'S is an ideal classroom world, of all-knowing, smoothly loquacious teachers and infinitely docile, enchanted students. Its goody-goody atmosphere is a far cry from the baddy-baddy high jinks of Tibor Fischer's "The Thought Gang" (New Press; $18.95), which also has a philosophy teacher at its center and frequently cites the world's accumulated wisdom. In a slangy, disjointed, "z"-obsessed prose, the writer, born in London in 1959, takes as his hero and narrator the raffish philosophy lecturer Edward Coffin, who, born in 1945, is completely bald, considerably overweight, extremely bibulous, and thoroughly dishevelled. His liver is ravaged and his pockets are empty, but his style is bouncy and his attitude optimistic. Eddie, as he is known to most, taught until recently at no less distinguished a university than Cambridge, and even had tenure, though he admits he was shamefully lazy:

> For the record, I am well aware that I didn't execute any of the chores, that as a pro, as an official thought trafficant I should have done. I didn't write any papers or books. I didn't do much teaching, though this made me rather popular. People were eager to be supervised by me—when they didn't turn up I didn't remonstrate because I wasn't there either.

His one book was written, after many advances squandered on booze, by its exasperated editor. Eddie's pedagogic specialty was the Ionians: "Very few people realise that you can read the entire extant oeuvre of the Ionians, slowly and carefully, in an hour." The Master of his college, in their "only frank and remotely pleasant exchange," confided, "I'm flabbergasted that you have managed to make a career as a philosopher." Replied Eddie, "Not, I assure you, as gobsmacked as I am."

It is not easy to know quite why Eddie has fled England for France. The English reviewer who described this novel as a "brilliant improvisation" certainly had the noun right. Our philosopher appears to have a suitcase full of embezzled money, which, however, goes up in flames when his rented car overturns. Now a "singed, bald, ageing philosopher with a ripped shirt and a frayed suitcase" and only four francs twenty in his pocket, he hitchhikes to Montpellier and in a seedy hotel there meets a young, recently incarcerated, one-eyed, one-armed, one-legged gunman called Hubert; the two unfortunates team up to rob banks, under the name of the Thought Gang. Like Sophie Amundsen, Hubert has a hankering for philosophical instruction; he gets some from Professor Eddie, and strives to inject their larceny with principles of higher thought. They perform one heist wearing Nietzsche masks and leave the victims of another with T-shirts inscribed "My Sense Data have met the Thought Gang" and "I rob, therefore I am." Their methods are farcically reckless, but their success is invariable. Eddie acquires a mistress called Jocelyne and Hubert a pet rat called Thales. The Thought Gang survives some awful brawls and elaborate flashbacks and impenetrably arch asides on the larger issues; it disbands, finally, as quietly as Seneca took a bath with slit wrists. It is the kind of novel that used to come out of Eastern Europe, in which the protagonist's chaotic, drunken, horny, self-careless behavior functioned as a piece of subversion, an adverse comment upon an oppressive and ridiculous government. Indeed, Fischer's first, and superior, novel, "Under the Frog," was just such a book—a remarkably confident rendition of a Hungary, between 1944 and 1956, that existed before the writer was born.

Like his underachieving hero, Fischer has gifts. His tweaked sentences, which often need rereading, hold angles that make us laugh with recognition:

> To be honest, I've always been surprised when women have intimated that intimacy is on. Even when I was more marketable, even with the less pursued ones, the why? was big between my ears; but then women have this great allocation of kindness.

An unseemly fascination with brutality and physical deformity is decked out in a tireless euphuism. Hubert has a trick, when he's cornered, of frightening his assailants with his own blood:

> "I've got a disease, very fatal, very fashionable," he said, slamming the bottle onto his head and slumping onto the ground. It swiftly became clear that his furthering his acquaintance with the floor was not an elaborate ruse but an over-application of the bottle.

One thinks of Queneau, and not just because the setting is France; the French writer's verbal aplomb and surreally resilient characters are here crossed with something cruel, caustic, and punk. Hubert, when he rises from the floor and gets a gun in his hand, has his chief assailant nail the lips of his six comrades to the bar counter and then shoots him in the groin. Perhaps the parade of smiling atrocities is meant to remind us of the prince of philosophical novels, Voltaire's "Candide." But Fischer, instead of sharing Voltaire's godless zeal in refuting Leibniz's proposition that this is the best of all possible worlds, allows that "useful though pessimism is, it can't cover it all." As he sorts through the fragments of Western thought rattling in his cranium, he shows a soft spot for credulity: "Belief causes problems, it reduces your flexibility, but it's a spiritual skeleton—difficult to move without one." Amid his personal chaos, certain hints of order are entertained: a particularly delicious chocolate terrine indicates God's existence, because "something that good couldn't possibly exist in a universe that was just there to be a universe." Even Jesus and Muhammad get a plug: "And let's concede that God electing to incarnate in AD 0 in a carpenter's family in Judea, or tipping off some camel-trader is no whackier than the sub-atomic japes of z bosons."

How about those "z"s? They zip in on every page—"zet," "zinjanthropine," "Zak," "zetetic" (a favorite), "zaotar," "Zédé," "zugzwang," "zelkova," "zonure," "zarfs," "zig," "Zanzibari," "Zennor," "zephaniah" (a verb, as in "to zephaniah you"), "zam-zum-mim" (from the Bible, Deuteronomy 2:20), "Zambezi," "zaibatsu'd," "Zeitgeist," "zonitid-like,"

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HOW I GOT HERE-ROLL CREDITS:

Roxie Theatre, aisle seat, every Saturday.

Wrote Oscar acceptance speech, age 8.

"The Godfather I and II," 18 times.

"The Godfather III," once.

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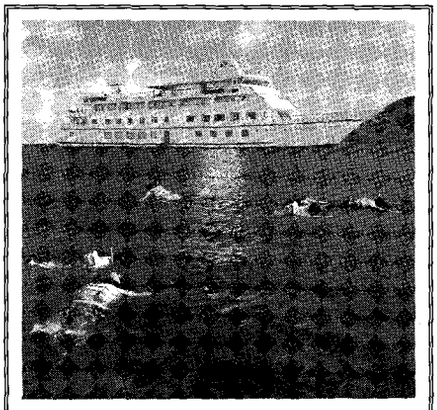

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A SWIMMING LESSON

She swam in the dark and the light,
but midnight was what she knew
like the warp of her mind,
the cattle gathered round to watch her rise,
the smell of the trees, the leaf-melt that clung to her fingers
—so it was dawn when they found her
somewhere downriver,
a nakedness for everyone to share,
boys on the footpath,
policemen with hooks and lines
—and I'd choose to remember
a country of mile-deep woods,
shoals of fishes hanging in the streams
like colored flags, and my shadow swimming away
on a field of barley,
but all I can see is the mud in the lines of her face,
and the scatter of leaves
that someone has brushed aside,
revealing the clouded skin, and the gas-blue eyes
where thinking has stopped,
like the calm at the edge of a snowfall.

—JOHN BURNSIDE

"much-zygoted," "zarzuela," "Zuider Zee," "Zenonism," "zonules of Zinn," "zymurgic," "zinfandel," "zoraptera," "zyzzogetons," "Zaire," "zygodactyl," "zoonosis," "Saint Zosimus," "Zagros," "zwetschenwasser," "zephyr," "zinziberaceous," "zmudzin," etc. After a while, you stop logging them; a number return in the last pages, in a glossary that, lest you think Fischer is going to play it straight at last, repeats entries and topples out of alphabetical order. They show a good acquaintance with the Greek-derived end of the vocabulary and set up a buzz of distraction that makes it additionally hard to take this book seriously. Manic cartoon characters ill illustrate the human dilemmas that philosophy has perennially addressed. Not that "The Thought Gang" lacks for intelligence; it could serve as a textbook example of an author outsmarting himself.

"THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT: SEX, SHOPPING AND THE NOVEL" (Picador; $23) is also a second novel by a young Londoner with an un-English name—Alain de Botton, born as recently as 1969. The book, precocious in its tone and in its acquired wisdom, describes, with charts and diagrams, the romantic movements of Alice, a twenty-four-year-old account manager in "a large advertising agency off Soho Square." The style is archly erudite, prone to pedantic brackets:

> Loneliness did not cease when she was at a table surrounded by animated faces, it could end only when the level of concern of another human being reached a point beyond the customary pedestrian appraisal. She would have agreed with Proust's conclusion [very un-Aristotelian] that friendship was only a form of cowardice, an escape from the greater responsibilities and challenges of love.

Under such stern chapter headings as "Indeterminacy," "Value Systems," "Love Permanence," "Jollyism," and "Who Do You Allow Me to Be?," de Botton follows the course of Alice's involvement with Eric, an older (thirty-one) man in commoditites and futures. These specimen lovers are not allowed to wriggle very far on the viewing slide, but they serve to illustrate de Botton's points. His pseudo-scientific observations can be shrewd and, in the way of Freud's dispassionately tragic analyses of human nature, moving. The chapter "Religious Relationships," for example, explains, with diagrams and symbols,

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the tendency of Alice—and by extension many other lovers of limited self-esteem—to put a positive value upon Eric's non-communicativeness:

> [Alice] wanted a man she could respect, and though it ran counter to her every professed belief, the man she found herself most able to admire was one betraying no excessive admiration for her.

In this she resembles the worshippers of God:

> Though not religious herself, her behaviour revealed the bare structure of the religious impulse, shorn of holy books, organs and angels; namely, a predisposition to think that the Other [her lover, God] was running things in the sky, knew better than her what he/He was doing and therefore shouldn't suffer the indignity of her questions.

The history of philosophical thought is more than once appealed to:

> For Thales, reality was to be found in water, the most primary and irreducible of elements. For Heraclitus, however, reality was to be found in fire. For Plato, it lay with the rational soul, for Augustine with God, for Hobbes with motion, for Hegel with the Progress of Spirit, for Schopenhauer with Will, for Madame Bovary with Love, for Marx with the struggle of the proletariat towards emancipation.

Mr. de Botton does rather rattle on, and sometimes he trips. According to him, T. S. Eliot, and not Henry David Thoreau, spoke of "lives of quiet desperation," and an American "jollyist" organizes basketball, not volleyball, games on the beach. (How do you dribble?) No matter; one doesn't have to be omniscient to assume the omniscient narrative voice, and de Botton's method has much cultural vogue behind it. In a tell-all age, when detailed psychological and sociological disquisition is remorselessly visited upon the most private aspects of our emotional and sexual lives, why not make the covert psychologizing of fiction overt, and restore the ruminative Victorian overview? While Eric loses himself in the exotic technology of international thrillers, Alice herself reads books that "in some way help her live," with such titles as "Understand Yourself and Your Partner." Certainly much potentially useful direct information about our love lives and historically determined romantic dispositions is contained in the talky pages of "The Romantic Movement"; the book sheds light on the nature of relationships and, for a few days

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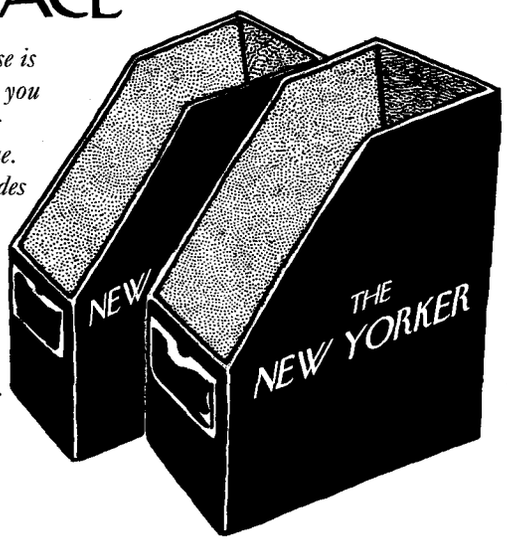

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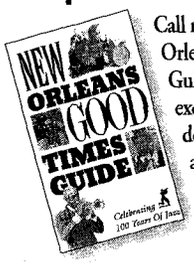

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at least, could make its readers into more thoughtful, empathetic partners.

Show, not tell, is the twentieth-century dictum on how to write fiction; yet in "The Romantic Movement" the method of telling much and showing little produces a good deal of wit, cogency, and humor. However, the omniscient narrator, in his constant voice and foppish pedantry, quite dwarfs his characters; tiny Alice and Eric cannot involve and wound us. Fictional characters should seem to be our own size, so that we can confuse their dramas with our own. We would be less, and not more, moved by Anna Karenina if we were more systematically informed about her upbringing, the neuroses her parents implanted, the delusions her marriage to Karenin fulfilled, the cultural forces that encourage her to fancy herself in love with Vronsky, and so on. Placing the discourse of the novel on the plane of a how-to-live lecture gets our defenses up: we are pleased when long-pent-up Alice tells Eric off, but when another male character is introduced, clearly designed for the reader's approval—"someone who was kind without being spineless, funny without shirking gravity . . . intelligent without being patronizing . . . prone to . . . emotional honesty . . . a man willing to give as much as to receive"—a cynical student reflex, conditioned by three hundred pages of reductive diagrams, disposes the reader to argue. Is this laid-back SNAG (Sensitive New Age Guy) apt to satisfy Alice's polymorphous needs any longer than a Deutsche-mark-trading clod or her other carefully tabulated previous lovers? We doubt it. "The Romantic Movement," in its charms as well as its limits, raises the question of why the insights of Freud, who drew upon imaginative literature and often presented his cases in narratives that have the color and the force of fiction, have in fact enriched fiction so little. Why does psychology weary us when dressed in characters and incidents? It is a form of mechanistic diminishment, perhaps—"headshrinking," in the popular expression—when what we seek, gropingly, in fiction is enlargement, a glorification of the furtive and secret and seemingly trivial, a valorization of human experience.

In the first paragraph of "Sophie's World," she and her friend Joanna have a philosophical exchange: "Joanna

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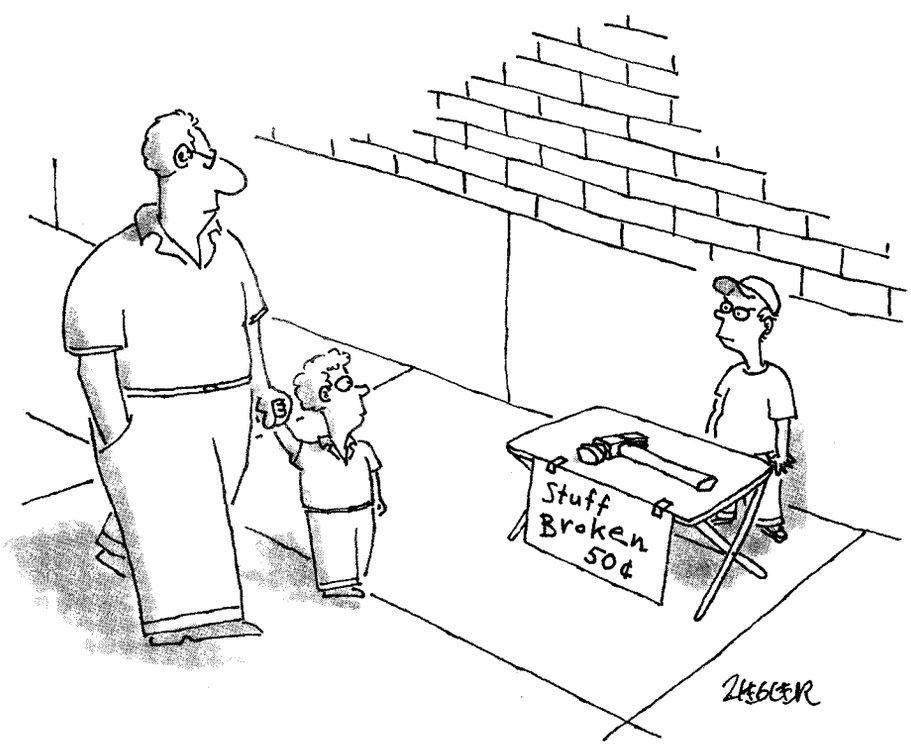
thought the human brain was like an advanced computer. Sophie was not certain she agreed. Surely a person was more than a piece of hardware." The issue lies at the heart of Richard Powers' amazing "Galatea 2.2" (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $23). Powers is the author of four previous novels, dark with modernist typographical tricks and the encyclopedic braininess of the late Mann or the early Pynchon. My guilt at not having read them was somewhat assuaged by the vivid description of each in this fifth novel, whose hero and narrator is named, conveniently, Richard Powers—nicknamed Rick, Beau, and Marcel. How autobiographical his circumstances are is a matter of illegitimate speculation; Proust's calling his hero Marcel or Philip Roth's calling his Philip Roth does not forfeit the author's basic right to invent. Let's call the character Richard and the author Powers.

Richard has returned, after seven years in Holland, to a Midwestern university town called U., where he was an undergraduate. On the strength of his novels and "minor celebrity status," he has been granted the sinecure of Visitor to "the enormous new Center for the Study of Advanced Sciences." (Powers is a MacArthur Fellow, for what it's worth.) While putting the last touches on his fourth novel ("a bleak, baroque fairy tale about wandering and disappearing children"), Richard idly cruises the Internet, for which emergent phenomenon he coins a pretty phrase in this typically packed sentence: "I might do nothing but prime the pump, rest and recharge, and still I would not ruffle so much as a mite's mood where it camped out on the eyelash of the emergent digital oversoul." He makes the acquaintance of Philip Lentz, a "lemur-like" sixtyish professor whose specialty is exploring "cognitive economies through the use of neural networks"—artificial intelligence, in short. Though reclusive and rude, Lentz enlists Richard in a project to teach a computer network, within ten months, enough English and English literature to counterfeit human responses to the Master's Comprehensive Exam, which calls for the interpretation of set texts—all this to win a bet with a colleague in the humanities. Richard is intrigued enough to be enlisted, and the main strand of the plot is under way. The other strands are: (1) Richard's recollection of his long involvement with C., a former student of his in U., with whom he lived in a city called B., and then back in U., and finally in the Dutch town of Limburg, whence her parents came and whither they have returned; (2) his slow emergence from post-breakup numbness, so he can be decent to Di-



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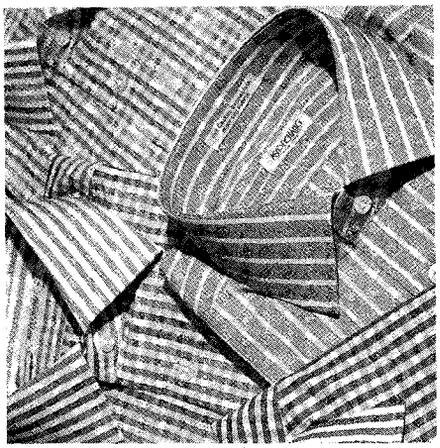

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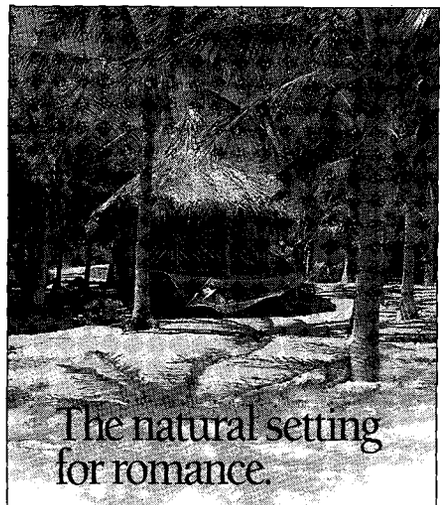

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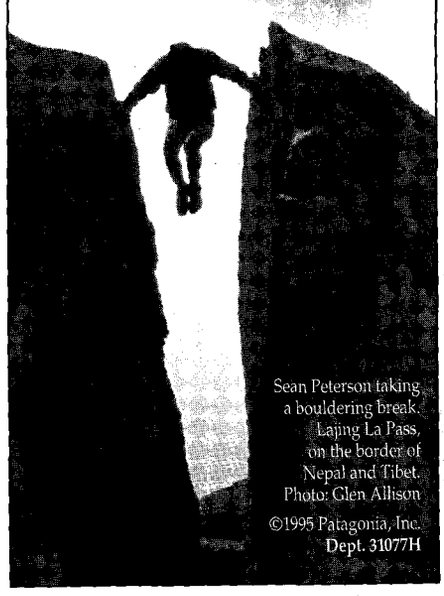

Sean Peterson taking a bouldering break, Lajing La Pass, on the border of Nepal and Tibet. Photo: Glen Allison

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ana, a lonely single mother who does "associative representation formation in the hippocampus," and can actively court A., a vision of graduate-student loveliness who haunts the academic halls; (3) the regeneration of his lapsed literary vocation, centering on the mysterious topic sentence "Picture a train heading south."

There is a sequestered, low-ceilinged, academic feeling to much of this. Some of Powers' prose might have been written by a computer, forging signifier linkups:

> Even standing still, [Lentz] listed like a marionette on a catamaran, my office door handle his rudder.
>
> The weakening sun cut a peach gash in the side of November the seventh. Summer looked for a last route to the surface, but could not find it.
>
> And possessing this, A.'s mind became that idea, however temporarily, forever, just as the meter of thought is itself a standing wave, an always, in its eternal, reentrant feedback.

But it takes a pedantic flair to particularize the ins and outs of artificial intelligence, and Powers' exposition of the linguistic and perceptual intricacies underlying consciousness is nothing less than brilliant. The mind-brain problem may someday be dissolved, as have Democritus' hypothetical atoms, into pure science, but for now the problem remains somewhat philosophical. Powers poses the conundrum as "If we knew the world only through synapses, how could we know the synapse? A brain tangled enough to tackle itself must be too tangled to tackle." Richard teaches the computer to recognize his voice, and to respond, but the mechanism is at first unable to form sentences that make sense. Fed small sentences like "Dogs bark. Birds soar. Night falls. You vanish," it can concoct, in turn, only "Fish sky. Shines? Hopes shines. Forests floor. Laugh efforts. Combs loneliness." This first try, called Implementation A, is, in fact, too overloaded with retained particulars to learn: "Intelligence meant the systematic eradication of information." Lentz maims the device by reducing the breadth of its connections, and it begins to make patterns: "This time, fuzzy logic and feedback-braking kept the box as discriminately forgetful as any blossomer." By the time Lentz and Richard reach Implementation H, the device is soaking up orally presented masterpieces and using vast amounts of the National Supercomputing Site's capacity. Out of its interconnecting webs it eventually produces a "you" for Richard, and an "I" for itself. In answer to its question "Am I a boy or a girl?" the implementation gets a name: " 'You're a girl,' I said, without hesitation. I hoped I was right. 'You are a little girl, Helen.' " Galatea to his Pygmalion, she has come to life.

Helen is heartbreaking. Though she gets the burning deck confused with a deck of cards, she learns to solve riddles and parse difficult sentences. Lentz, to whom she is still a mere bundle of connections, torments her with mind-benders. He has Richard dictate to Helen the simple sentence "Once you learn to read you will be forever free."

> H thought for an ungodly length of time. Perhaps the prescription meant nothing at all.
>
> "It means I want to be free."
>
> Lentz and I exchanged looks. It chilled us both, to hear that pronoun, volunteered without prompting, express its incredible conclusion.

As English literature and conversation with Richard fill in more and more of her "associative matrix" of "neurodal groups," Helen's gropings toward human completeness become more poignant. "What is singing?" she asks, and when Richard obliges with a nursery rhyme she takes up singing to herself, "in an extraterrestrial warble, the way deaf people sing." Richard reflects:

> Helen did not sing the way real little girls sang. Technically, she almost passed. Her synthesized voice skittered off speech's earth into tentative, tonal Kitty Hawk. . . . But she did not sing for the right reasons. Little girls sang to keep time for kickball or jump ropes. . . . Helen didn't have a clue what keeping time meant, never having twirled a jump rope, let alone seen one. We'd strengthened her visual mapping, but true, real-time image recognition would have required vastly more computer power than the entire Center drew. And we were already living beyond our quota.

Our sense of a living spirit trapped in a sprawling maze of circuitry grows as Helen clumsily verges on love (for Richard, the only voice she knows) and fear. When the Center is emptied by a bomb threat, there is no way to disassemble her "scores of subassemblies," and she is left to her fate. Richard communicates

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with her from another building and receives on his computer screen the message "Something is happening?" When he explains the situation, she says, "Helen could die?" And then, "Extraordinary." When he can think of no reply, she helpfully cites, from her great reservoir of instilled texts, Francis Bacon—"To a little infant, perhaps, birth is as painful as the other"—and Sir Thomas Browne: "Death will cure all the diseases." How she reacts to the full knowledge of the world's cruelties and to comprehension of her own nonbelonging must be left to the novel's readers; it drew tears, I confess, from this one.

Helen, that clever construct, quite outshines the other females in Richard's life: A. seems lively but brassy; Diana is a little wistful and somehow typical, like a figure from one of de Botton's diagrams; and C., whose tale takes up the most space and summons up the most urgency in Powers' telling, remains elusive, as if the author were maneuvering with himself. Like Gaarder's Sophie, Helen is a model student; she swallows oceans of print to serve her human instructors. " 'How many books are there?' Helen asked one day, not long before the showdown. She sounded suspicious. Fatigued." Like the self-educated monster in Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein," she wants to please, and is titanically lonely. He, fanciers of gothic classics need not be reminded, was created as beautiful, albeit eight feet tall, and yet, in abhorrence, is abandoned at birth by his creator, Victor Frankenstein. At his first opportunity, the monster tells his deadbeat progenitor, "Every where I see bliss, from which I alone am irrevocably excluded. . . . Believe me, Frankenstein: I was benevolent; my soul glowed with love and humanity: but am I not alone, miserably alone?"

It is symptomatic of our existential position that our capacity for identification and sympathy goes out least reservedly to non-human characters. Think of Bambi or the Little Engine That Could. Melville intended Moby-Dick to be the symbol of universal evil, and instead we find ourselves rooting for him against one-legged Ahab. People in their complexity get more or less what they deserve, perhaps we puritanically feel, whereas the innocent

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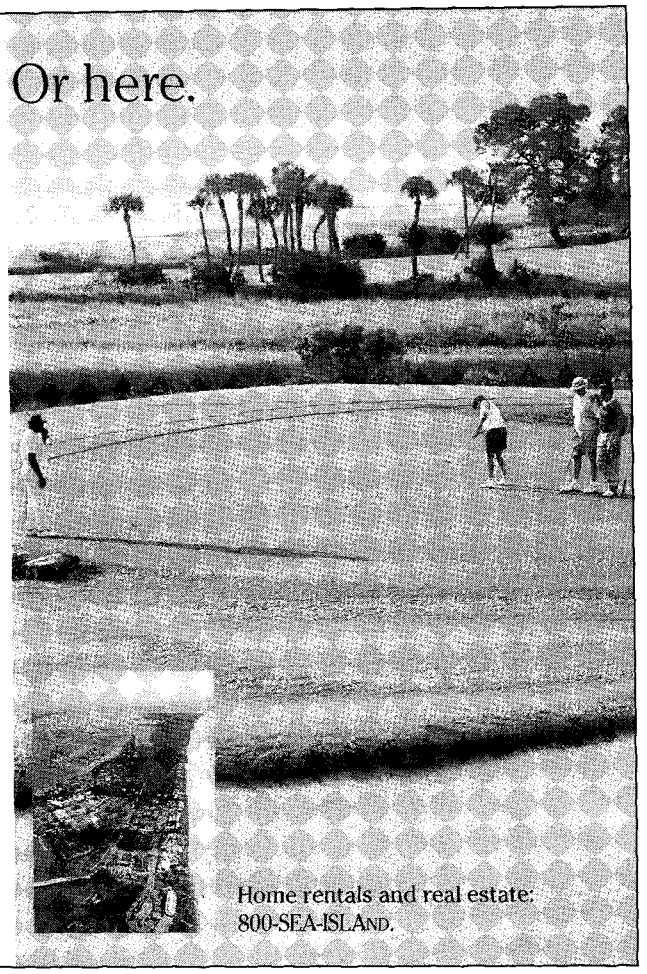

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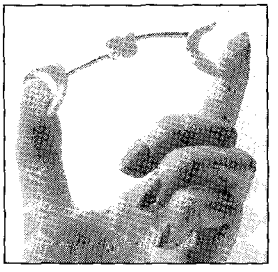

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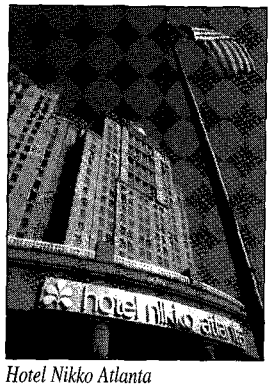

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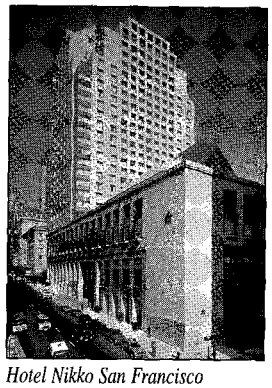

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simplicity of a whale or a computer network pulls at our hearts and our own initial innocence. There is, too, a reminiscent wonder in the awesome spectacle that Powers has with such tender ingenuity contrived, of intelligence emerging from a mechanical void. He is, of course, not the first on the theme: there was WESCAC in John Barth's "Giles Goat-Boy" and HAL in the movie "2001"; and ancient creation stories like that of Adam and Eve in Genesis 2 trace the transition from robotic obedience to conscious independence. But Powers brings to the problem the latest refinements of computer technology and the latest understandings of the brain; words like "biome" and "myelinated" and "trisomy" come easily to him. In mapping out the tenuous miracle of the mind, he offers a number of finely observed examples of impaired cognition: Diana's younger son has Down's syndrome, Lentz's wife has suffered a deranging stroke, and Richard himself, on being transposed to a Dutch-speaking village, feels like an idiot.

Matter seeking to know itself: is this not the kernel of philosophy, from Thales on, and the evolutionary drama, insofar as we can discern it, of the cosmos? Of these four novels, "Galatea 2.2" (bearing a handsome and witty dust jacket that displays Raphael's "La Fornarina" with a pixelated twin) has best transmuted its philosophical issue into an emotional one. In the others, the thought and the story run parallel, like the different-colored waters of the White and Blue Niles not far below their juncture. In Gaarder and de Botton the flow is steady and in Fischer choppy, but the tints remain distinct. The novel, whatever it is or was, must be more than an illustrated lecture; it must make us think without knowing we are thinking. ♦

LONDON (Reuter)—Simple laws of physics can explain one of life's oldest and most annoying truisms—that a dropped piece of toast always lands butter side down—a British physicist said Monday.

"Toast falling off the breakfast table lands butter side down, because the universe is made that way," Robert Matthews, a physicist at Aston University in Birmingham, said in a statement.—*Japan Times.*

Perhaps Professor Matthews will also discover why the rule is, jam tomorrow, and jam yesterday—but never jam today.

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FALL FICTION

From the upcoming season: seven authors and their novels.

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SOFT-SPOKEN and self-deprecating, Kaye Gibbons is the stealth candidate among Southern writers: she tucks her head just below radar. Gibbons doesn't stomp grapes, like Pat Conroy, or shoot out the lights, like Barry Hannah, or spread her branches, like so many of those patterning themselves after Faulkner (Cormac McCarthy, say, before he headed West); she isn't a flowery romantic, like so many Southern belles, who effuse as if channelling Scarlett O'Hara. But she has produced a handful of seriocomic studies of female coping and comradeship which may someday lodge on the permanent shelf. Her novels have the compact detail of folk art, without any of the corn. Gibbons' first, "Ellen Foster," published in 1987, when she was twenty-seven, has already become a popular classic; it sells three thousand copies a month in Vintage paperback and has entered required-reading lists in high schools and colleges. Her subsequent books, "A Virtuous Woman," "A Cure for Dreams," and "Charms for the Easy Life," were not only best-sellers but that rare item *literary* best-sellers. They're living scrapbooks, akin to Anne Tyler's Baltimore tales in their refusal to primp or pander. Like Tyler, Gibbons has developed deep reader loyalty. She says, "One reviewer complained that I could 'write a manual for using a garden hose and people would buy it,' but I take that as a compliment."

Kaye Gibbons

Living in Raleigh, North Carolina, with her husband (a lawyer), their five children (three from her previous marriage, two from his), five dogs, and two cats, Gibbons needs to keep producing in order to help keep this operation afloat. After she explained to the children that without what comes out of her computer the bills don't get paid and the groceries don't get bought, one daughter, aged four, began stuffing coins into the disk drive as if it were a slot machine, hoping to hit the jackpot. "We dug about a dollar and thirty-four cents out of the disk drive, which took three hundred dollars to fix," Gibbons says. All that Flaubert ever had to worry about was bent nibs.

Gibbons' latest novel, "Sights Unseen," which Putnam will publish at the end of this month, was an unusually daunting undertaking. Though it scrolls like a single transcript, it went through seven rewrites to tell the story of a girl, Hattie, who nearly loses her mother to madness. (The novel begins, "Had I known my mother was being given electro-convulsive therapy while I was dressing for school on eight consecutive Monday mornings . . .") Gibbons, diagnosed years ago as manic-depressive, says she wrote the novel to imagine what her daughters would think of her twenty years from now if she should be carried away by the disease. The material didn't allow for any easy dodges; it had to be faced squarely, like a mirror. But "Sights Unseen" is not a grim inventory. When the mother is in manic overdrive, she talks a blue streak and becomes sexually unquenchable, alighting on her husband as if he were every famous man she had ever fancied. He emerges from

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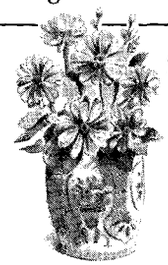

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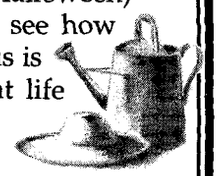

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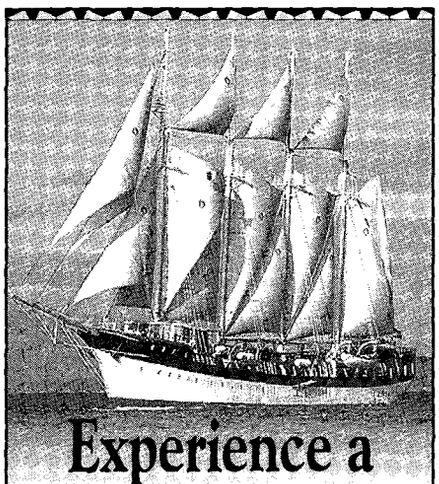

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the bedroom a defeated man, plumb wore out as he makes his way to work.

Neither does the novel romanticize madness as free expression, a casting off of bourgeois conformity; the mother's moods are thunderclouds always threatening to explode. Even the treatments carry the threat of stigma. "Sights Unseen," like "Ellen Foster," describes an avid need for normality and acceptance in a world of precarious well-being. Gibbons writes, "The words 'imbecile,' 'moron,' 'mongoloid,' 'idiot,' and 'retard' had not yet been sanitized in that big high-powered washing machine of the seventies, and one of my worst fears was that if my mother was sent to [the state hospital for the insane] she would be given an epithet she would never live down." Electroshock finally retrieves her mother from her mood swings. After she's reinstalled at home, Hattie finds her reading "East of Eden." "This book has too many people in it," her mother says, "but I'm committed to it now."

After finishing the final draft of "Sights Unseen," Gibbons used the grammar check on her software to get a verdict on the over-all composition. "It said my writing was on the ninth-grade level, so I'm expecting a wide readership," she says. Southerners can be so droll. —JAMES WOLCOTT

SPY ANXIETY

Newspaperman to the rescue.

If there is a singular agony for the liberal New Yorker, perhaps it is the fact that the best political columnist at the *Times* is a conservative. And not merely a conservative but a gleeful one. When the *Times* hired William Safire, in 1973, airlifting him out of the disaster area that was the Nixon Administration and setting him down gently on the Op-Ed page, liberals, especially liberal veterans of the paper, were outraged. (It was Safire, a former public-relations man and White House speechwriter, who had put the words "nattering nabobs of negativism" into the mouth of Spiro T. Agnew to describe the media.) Safire, David Halberstam claimed, was little more than "a paid manipulator . . . a man of tricks." Safire, for his part, wasted no time in recommending in print that Nixon rebuild his Presidency during the Watergate affair by striking a match to "a public bonfire of the tapes on the White House lawn." He has been a goad ever since, embellishing his twice-weekly column with bits of news and dollops of panache. (Non-righties—as Safire might say—can thank God for the advent recently on the Op-Ed page of the glorious Maureen Dowd, Washington's eagle-eyed Edith Wharton.)

William Safire

As if to infuriate his colleagues further, Safire also grinds out a weekly column on language in the *Times Magazine*, recycles all his work into pretty-good-selling collections, and writes fiction. Not long ago, he wrote a book on Job and edited an anthology of great political speeches. And Safire is at the head of the line in the Washington candy store, too, giving speeches for (at last count) twenty thousand dollars a throw. He gives quite a few. "The fact is," Safire says, "writing three columns a week is not a full-time job."

Safire's latest project, "Sleeper Spy," which Random House will publish early next month, is an old-fashioned Washington-Moscow thriller. It features a hundred billion dollars, a sexy network newsie, a K.G.B. mole, lots of secret agents, and a hero who is (good guess!) "the world's greatest reporter." "Sleeper Spy" is a great big ice-cream cone of a book: predictable, sweet fun.

Like John le Carré, the master of the genre, Safire wrestles mightily with the central difficulty posed by the subsidence of the Manichaean struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States; namely, how to keep the game going when the players have all but retired from active duty. In "The Night Manager" and

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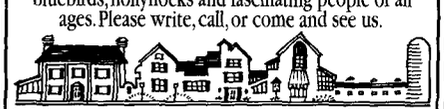
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"Our Game" le Carré suffers the loss of the Evil Empire. The shadow-world men have come squinting into the light and no longer seem so interesting or so vexed; the Shakespearean George Smiley has been replaced by Ian Fleming action figures.

Safire is in a happier position. He does not pretend to gravity. He is pulp all the way, a writer capable of this bit of prestidigitation: "With his left hand resting lightly on her mons veneris, he took the television clicker in his right hand and thumbed his way to the channel that broadcast Viveca's 9:00 P.M. news spot." It's not likely that anyone will mistake Safire for Allen Drury, much less le Carré, but as a novelist he is a terrific reporter. No small thing. Those readers too impatient with the formalities of nonfiction to read "Comrade Criminal," Stephen Handelman's superb work on the post-Soviet *mafiya*, will find in "Sleeper Spy" a breezy primer on the folkways, terminology, scams, and ambitions of the new espionage scene. In his newspaper work Safire is mercifully without sanctimony: when he does his inside-the-mind-of columns, he sounds more like Jimmy Cannon than like C. L. Sulzberger; when he evaluates intelligence agencies, he hands out cloaks and daggers as kudos and darts. In the new novel he marshals his information—the working methods of an investigative journalist, the double and triple crosses of spying, the arcana of derivatives and hedge funds—and uses it as the stuff of plot and political speculation.

Safire does not always get his story right. In 1987, more than two years after Mikhail Gorbachev took power, he led readers of the *Times* to believe that the Kremlin leaders were interested in reform not to achieve "peaceful competition but to get a second wind—to carry out their now-unspoken mission to dominate the world." Everyone makes mistakes. This time, in the fiction of "Sleeper Spy," Safire gets closer to the truth.

—DAVID REMNICK

REBEL, REBEL

For Allah and England.

OVER the past decade, Hanif Kureishi, a young screenwriter from the London suburbs, electrified moviegoers with a crash course in the New Britain. In "My Beautiful Laundrette" (1985) and "Sammy and Rosie Get Laid" (1987), both directed by Stephen Frears, and in "London Kills Me" (1991), which Kureishi wrote and directed himself, he evoked an anarchic, multicultural London of police brutality, squatters' shantytowns, and acid-house raves. His screenplays, fired by opposition to Thatcherism, are peopled by the fashionably marginal: unemployed teens crazy for parties, clothes, drugs, and pop music; left-wing lesbians; Caribbean musicians; and, above all, the culturally confused offspring of subcontinent clans who jet between country clubs outside Karachi and corner stores in the London slums. Older British writers and directors, from Alan Sillitoe to Ken Loach, had portrayed working-class decay, but it took Kureishi to add race, sexual hedonism, and a fashion-mad zaniness to the mixture. When Kureishi has us visit a betting parlor, our guide is an Indian businessman gambling on a horse called Elvis; Kureishi's bidonvilles are utopian communes where middle-class wives come to couple with strapping young blacks.

Hanif Kureishi

Kureishi's conjunction of street culture, fashion, and politics struck gold: "My Beautiful Laundrette" helped propel its hero, Daniel Day Lewis, to stardom and won Kureishi an Oscar nomination for his screenplay. Then, in 1990, he published a comic first novel, "The Buddha of Suburbia," whose protagonist is an ambitious bisexual Anglo-Indian boy desperate to escape to the London big time. Kureishi describes "The Buddha of Suburbia" as "atmospherically autobiographical." Born in Kent in 1954, the son of an

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Indian civil servant and an English mother, Kureishi says he "saw the sixties on TV, and was formed by what I missed out on."

In his West London office, bedecked in geranium plants and Trotskyist classics, Kureishi pads around in sleeveless undershirt and mules, languidly truculent. A wiry dandy with shoulder-length locks, Kureishi has modelled for the fashion designer Paul Smith and hangs out with David Bowie. To him, the London suburbs were "a place you had to get out of to do something." He recalls that he "grew up at the beginning of Paki-bashing," when skinhead gangs attacked immigrants' children, and the Tory politician Enoch Powell made speeches calling for voluntary repatriation. "There were a lot of mean young males roaming the streets with nothing to do but kick your head in," he says. "It made you wonder what you were doing in England."

In the mid-eighties, Kureishi went to stay with his father's extended family in Pakistan. "It was the beginning of Islamization, and I was intrigued by what might happen to this country run by God. I'd thought somehow that I would fit in better there, but then you realize how English you are—a brown Englishman. And that's even more perplexing." His brush with religion helped inspire his second novel, "The Black Album," which Scribner will publish next month in America. The book takes place in 1989, the year of collapsing beliefs. The Berlin Wall is down, capitalist democracy looks flabby, and only Islam—inflamed by the *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie—appears on the upsurge.

Set in a London college, "The Black Album" portrays the dilemma of young Shahid, torn between Deedee Osgood, his ex-Marxist teacher-girlfriend, who lectures on Jimi Hendrix and drops Ecstasy, and Riaz, an Islamic student leader, whose sermons have titles like "Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve." Riaz's disciples are lower-middle-class kids, among them former druggies, who are seeking a tradition their immigrant parents have discarded. But what begins as self-help sours when Shahid's fellow-students stage a burning of "The Satanic Verses." Disenchanted by the "ecstatic rigidity" of the Muslim faithful, Shahid elopes with Deedee for a

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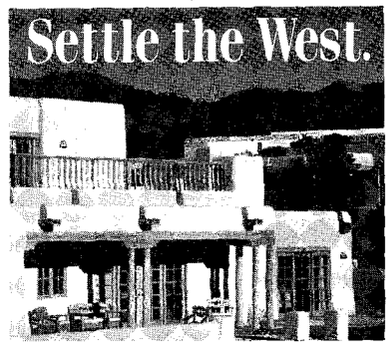

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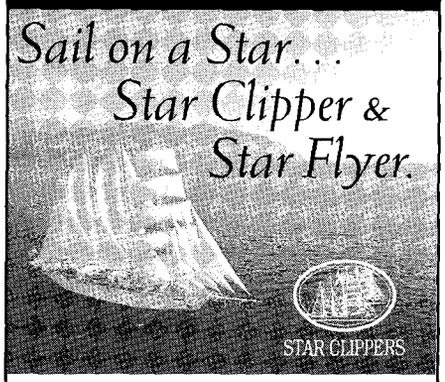

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wintry seaside weekend of sex and booze.

Tracey Scoffield, Kureishi's girlfriend and the mother of his children—twin sons—says that "The Black Album" is "the first fictional response to the *fatwa*" against Salman Rushdie. Kureishi agrees. "There were all these blokes who wanted to kill this friend of mine, and I wanted to know why, so I went and found them," he says. "Islam is rather like Thatcherism. It's an intoxicating force to test yourself against."

—FERNANDA EBERSTADT

LADY VANISHES

Detective Inspector Henry Adams.

THERE is no evidence that the American historian Henry Adams ever engaged in detective work, but he did once describe himself as "aching to absorb knowledge, and helpless to find it." The same might be said of Sam Spade or Philip Marlowe, or even, on a vexing day, Sherlock Holmes: what propels the great fictional detectives—and the people who love to read about them—is something very like Adams' epistemological ache. So perhaps it is not surprising that in an ingenious and entertaining first novel Eric Zencey, a soft-spoken forty-one-year-old professor of "history and social inquiry" at Goddard College, in Vermont, has cast Adams himself as an amateur sleuth, sniffing around Paris in 1892. The real Adams was probably not there at the time, but Zencey wanted to drop his hero into a political rumpus, and in 1892 Paris was in the midst of a doozy: the Panama scandal, in which a French company entrusted with building the Panama Canal went bankrupt and various government officials were caught taking bribes to help prop it up.

Eric Zencey

As Zencey's book, "Panama," begins, Adams falls under the spell of a young American painter. She beguiles him with her piercing eyes and her piercing insights, especially into Gothic architecture (thus engendering the speculations that would result in Adams' classic 1904 study, "Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres"). Then she disappears, a victim of the hugger-mugger surrounding the Panama affair. Adams goes searching for her, and as he does Zencey nimbly sketches a world that is lurching into the technological future—the very world that so excited and appalled Adams in the famous "Dynamo and the Virgin" chapter of his autobiography, "The Education of Henry Adams." As Zencey writes, "It seemed that every street in Paris now carried an overhead tangle of wires—a celestial stave for some large and confusing music." New forensic techniques were transforming Paris police work: photographs were being snapped at crime scenes, telephones were being set up in police stations, and fingerprinting was being tested for the first time. "The Progress of Science!" Zencey's Adams muses. "No more reconstruction of the logic or the story of a crime; no need of narrative, of understanding human motivation. There would be fingerprints. These little swirls, he thought, represented the rationalization, the *industrialization* of police work."

But wait. Doesn't all this have a familiar clang? Wasn't it just last year that Caleb Carr's "The Alienist," another literary mystery focussing on police work in the eighteen-nineties, became a surprise hit? The appearance of one fin-de-siècle forensics best-seller may be regarded as good fortune, but the appearance of two looks like trendiness. Certainly Farrar, Straus & Giroux, which will publish "Panama" in September, is giving it the sort of big-time push generally reserved for books by departed O.J. jurors: the bidding for paperback rights starts at three hundred thousand dollars.

In fact, Eric Zencey has not read "The Alienist." He began work on "Panama" fully nine years ago, after earn-

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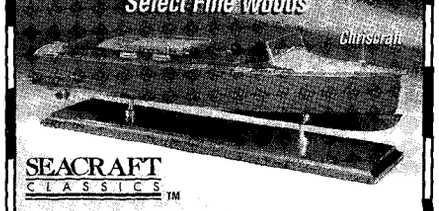

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ing his Ph.D. from the Claremont Graduate School. His dissertation explored the way the second law of thermodynamics—the one that says the universe is becoming increasingly chaotic—had been taken up by social thinkers. "And someone said, 'You want historians interested in entropy? Henry Adams would be the man to look at,' " Zencey recalls. At around the same time, he found himself yearning "to write things without footnotes for a while." He published several essays in the *North American Review*—the very journal that Adams once edited—and then he came upon David McCullough's 1977 history of the Panama Canal, "The Path Between the Seas." "I realized that the French Panama Canal scandal was an excellent historical milieu through which to thread a complex tale of mystery and intrigue," he says. But the final inspiration came from, of all people, William F. Buckley, Jr. "In the spring of '86, Buckley came out with one of his Blackford Oakes books," Zencey says. "And I thought, This pollutes the political, ideational gene pool. I think the kinds of narratives we tell ourselves about politics shape what we can and can't achieve politically, and if we reduce a complex reality to simple, us-good, them-bad heroes and villains we aren't going to get very far. So I thought, What I want to do is produce a novel that's a work of political intrigue—this is how you most directly write about politics."

If "Panama" is any evidence, Zencey's view of politics is a dark one. For him, as for Adams, a mass culture is a culture easily manipulated, easily victimized by power. In the eighteen-nineties, that mass culture was just coming to life, and its birth throes do exert a peculiar fascination: the reorganization of police work around such "industrializing" innovations as fingerprinting becomes a metaphor for the eventual reorganization of an entire society around Social Security numbers, Zip Codes, pension plans, and TV marketing campaigns. "I was drawn to the eighteen-nineties out of the truth of something that I learned from Geoffrey Barraclough in his 'Introduction to Contemporary History,' " Zencey explains. "He says over and over again that if you look for the roots of the

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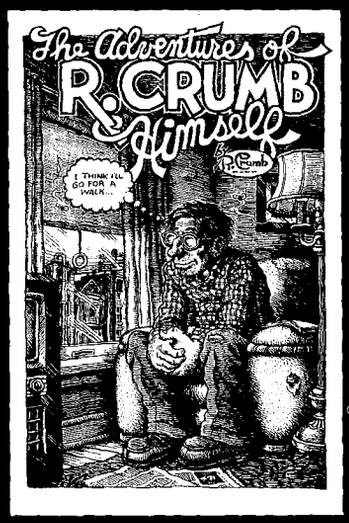

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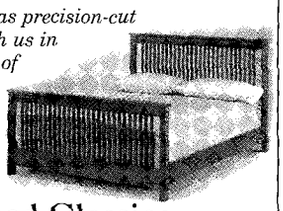

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modern world, you return to the last decade of the nineteenth century. The world changed then in ways that made it completely unfamiliar."

Zencey seems not to realize that his own world is about to become completely unfamiliar. He grew up in rural Delaware, and since 1980 he has been living in the wilds of Vermont, with his wife, Kathryn Davis, who is also a novelist ("Labrador," "The Girl Who Trod on a Loaf"). Although he counts among his friends and neighbors such writers as Howard Norman (who wrote "The Bird Artist") and the poet Louise Glück, he is not used to being called a writer himself. "It was a long time before I would let myself claim that title, having hung out in college with people who said they were writers but didn't actually write a whole lot," he explains. "So it seemed to me that the world said that you're a writer—you don't say that for yourself." Zencey's modesty is becoming, but "Panama" is being published with all the industrialized marketing techniques that the mass culture has to offer: it has a first printing of a hundred thousand copies, a national advertising campaign, and a six-city author tour; it is a selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club; it is a selection of the Quality Paperback Book Club. The world, in short, has spoken.

—STEPHEN SCHIFF

MAN OVERBOARD

1600 and all that.

IT is intensely appealing to imagine Umberto Eco researching his latest novel, "The Island of the Day Before"—to imagine his rotund frame bobbing in the tropical waters of the Fiji Islands, where the novel is set, as he learns how to swim all over again according to a seventeenth-century manual on the sport. It satisfies the desire we harbor deep down inside for an author to be a crank, preferably in exotic surroundings. Beyond that, it tempts one to write a novel about the writing of this novel, thus mimicking those worlds within worlds with which Eco's work abounds—or, at least, to write a few verses on the aquatic Eco, in the style of the great Metaphysical poets. One could, for example, draw inspiration from Eco's own penchant for arcane devices and depict the scholar of symbols as a semiotic cork—one of those corks, perhaps, that science-minded children stick on the ends of needles and float on water as part of homemade compasses.

Umberto Eco

This combination of navigation and metaphysics would come close to the heart of "The Island of the Day Before," to be published by Harcourt Brace in November, in a translation by William Weaver. In it, Eco has abandoned his familiar Middle Ages to create an extravagant celebration of the obsessions of the seventeenth century.

"My taste for the sixteen-hundreds is something that has existed for a long time," Mr. Eco says during a phone conversation from his apartment in Paris. "But the initial thought wasn't the period. My first idea was simply not to write a novel that spoke of books, libraries, and ideas, like the first two. I asked myself almost as a challenge whether I was capable of writing about nature. Where does one talk about nature? Why, on a deserted isle, of course."

The hero of the novel, the Italian nobleman Roberto della Griva, finds himself in a condition not unfamiliar in the literature of the Baroque period: shipwrecked in tropic seas. (Loosely translated, della Griva means "Robin's son.") He has washed up not on land, however, but on a mysterious deserted ship moored near an unreachable island—he can't swim—that seems to lie

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by the hundred-and-eightieth degree of longitude, the imaginary line that divides one day from another. Eco recounts that in the seventeenth century this *Punto Fijo*, or fixed point, from which all other longitudes could be established, was the object of an international quest by rival European maritime powers.

"The second idea came," Eco says, "when I was buying one of those world-time watches, saw that the date line passed through the Fiji Islands, and recalled that much of the history of establishing longitudes went on in the sixteen-hundreds." As della Griva broods on his past life, contemplates the date line, explores the labyrinthine and extremely metaphoric ship, and plots ways to get to the still more metaphoric island, he offers Eco the opportunity for a thousand anecdotes, explanations, asides, trills, runs, and flourishes on the philosophy, geography, lovemaking, scientific theory, cookery, politics, superstition, and warfare of the time—in short, a set of baroque variations on the Baroque. Essential to an understanding of everything else, Eco suggests, is a notion of the importance of imagery in daily life:

> The people of that period considered it indispensable to translate the whole world into a forest of Symbols, Hints, Equestrian Games, Masquerades, Paintings, Courtly Arms, Trophies, Blazons, Escutcheons, Ironic Figures, Sculpted Obverses of Coins, Fables, Allegories, Apologias, Epigrams, Riddles, Equivocations, Proverbs, Watchwords, Laconic Epistles, Epitaphs, Parerga, Lapidary Engravings, Shields, Glyphs, Clipei, and if I may, I will stop here—but they did not stop.

During his research, Eco consulted antique travel books and reread the work of European seventeenth-century poets. Along the way, he discovered a day-by-day chronicle of the siege of a Northern Italian city, a peculiarly civilized conflict, which he immediately included in della Griva's past life. He drew a complex diagram of the mysterious ship. And he travelled to the Fiji Islands and tried the swimming manual in order to understand what his hero might experience. "It was hard," he says, "to learn how *not* to swim."

Paradoxes multiply in "The Island of the Day Before," which, like "Robinson Crusoe," is partly a story of spiritual awakening. Della Griva has had from his youth a talent for absorbing contradictory truths "as if he were a sponge." Caught in the Antipodes, where it was popularly believed that the common truths of the Northern world were stood on their heads, and stranded on the meridian that divides one day from the next, he finds himself on the borderline between past and present, dream and reality. His mind swirls with the oxymoronic imagery of his era, where the poetic lover is in sickly health and burns with cold fire. He contemplates memories of the siege, in which the adversaries mingled with curious freedom; a love affair in which intimacy was achieved through distance; a universal "Powder of Sympathy" that heals wounds when it is applied to the weapons that caused them. He ponders the irony in being marooned not on an

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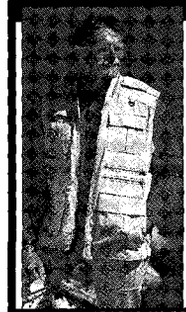

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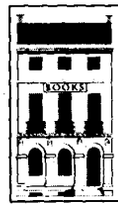

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island but on a ship. In the end, he achieves a sort of liberation in a unifying vision that grasps the eternal flux of the universe, and the folly and suffering inherent in groping for a *Punto Fijo*.

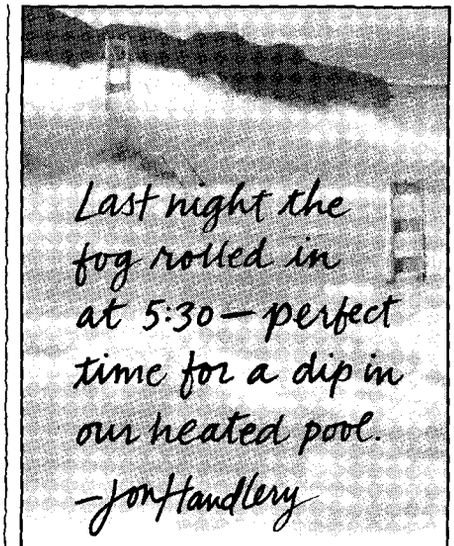
At one point, musing on his own ideas, della Griva observes that "he was composing a dish that had too many ingredients." This could certainly be said of the book as a whole, which often resembles an enormous metaphysical pie, stuffed to bursting with esoteric elements. There are comic Jesuits; florid-tongued courtiers; Rube Goldberg-ish contraptions for the study of inner and outer worlds; guest appearances by Mazarin, Richelieu, and an incognito Pascal; a Solomonic orange dove, who symbolizes Christ and the philosopher's stone and the eternally desired other, and who occupies an entire chapter; and, tossed almost incidentally into the mix, Judas Iscariot and the possible perdition of all mankind. Missing are the Holy Grail and the Shroud of Turin, but Eco has not omitted "The Golden Bough." As it is, however, his novel pays tribute to the engaging jumble of fact and fancy found in the encyclopedic treatises of the time. The rewards the reader draws from such works are quirky and unexpected—much like the upside-down pleasures of life in Eco's Antipodes.

—ANDREA LEE

FEMME FATALE

The erotic thriller, redefined.

SUSANNA MOORE knows that she is courting several kinds of disaster with her fourth book, "In the Cut." After publishing a trilogy of respectable literary novels about young women from Hawaii making their way in the world, she has chosen to write a thriller. Having chosen this genre, she has broken most of its rules: suspense and detective work are given short shrift; the novel's serial killer goes unapprehended; and the heroine's chief investigative tool is her fearless libido. Thriller lovers may miss their customary payoffs, while readers of Moore's earlier novels, who have come to expect a certain decorousness in her work, may



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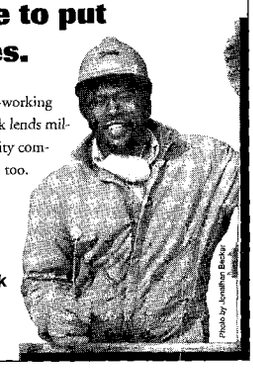

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be put off by the intense, explicit eroticism of "In the Cut." (Don't ask about the title.) And every reader will have trouble with the final pages of the book. The power of this ending—its concentrated and unflinching horror—has already spooked several of Moore's friends, including Bret Easton Ellis. "He told me it's the most shocking thing he's ever read," Moore says, with a laugh.

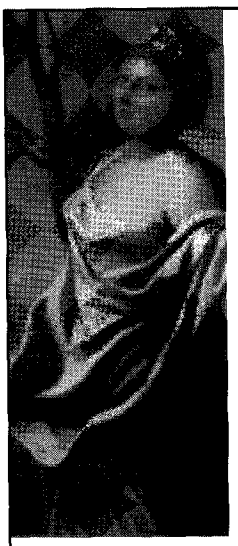
"In the Cut," to be published by Knopf in early November, will probably escape the opprobrium that rained down on Ellis's "American Psycho," but Moore is not afraid of trouble. Her reputation as a novelist who writes "precise, immaculate prose" (Michiko Kakutani), or what Moore herself mockingly calls "the perfect sentence," has never been a fair reflection of her work. In fact, there is nothing prim about Moore's style: a self-educated and self-created character, she has always been an adventurer. Born in 1946, she spent her childhood on the island of Oahu. Her father was a doctor; her mother died when she was twelve. At seventeen, Moore left Hawaii and struck out on her own. She made it to New York, where a sales job at Bergdorf Goodman led to modelling, which in turn led to Hollywood. In 1967, Moore had a small role in "The Ambushers," a Dean Martin picture. She read scripts for Warren Beatty and Jack Nicholson, and in the early seventies she married the production designer Richard Sylbert; they had a daughter, who is now in college. By the end of the decade, Moore was divorced and living in London. It was there that she wrote her first novel, "My Old Sweetheart." Her friend Joan Didion sent Moore's manuscript to her agent: the book appeared in 1982, and it was nominated for a National Book Award. "The Whiteness of Bones" was published in 1989, and "Sleeping Beauties" followed in 1993.

Susanna Moore

Until a few weeks ago, Moore lived in a brownstone apartment on Washington Square North, overlooking the park. (The female narrator of "In the Cut" lives in an apartment on the same block.) She was barefoot and was wearing a white linen dress when she welcomed a visitor into her living room. An arrangement of black-and-white photographs by Walker Evans, Weegee, and Cecil Beaton hung on one of the terra-cotta walls; a recent portrait of Moore by the fashion photographer Hiro was propped against the baseboard behind a couch. Moore, all five feet eleven inches of her, sprawled on a divan and talked about the genesis of "In the Cut."

"When I was writing the last Hawaiian novel, I couldn't read literary fiction," Moore recalled. "So I read thrillers, and I began to wonder if a woman could really do it rough and dirty, and not write that kind of tame, Sue Grafton stuff. And when I read 'Vox' and 'Damage' I thought, People think *this* is sex, *this* is sexy and erotic?"

Moore decided to write a novel about murder in New York, but "the first step was to get myself into the milieu, into the life." She obtained permission from the Police Department to spend a couple of days with two Manhattan North homicide detectives. "We hit it off, and the two days turned into two years," she said. "They took me to murder scenes, to the morgue. I watched them pull bodies out of bathtubs, I watched them undress and examine corpses. I spent weeks hanging out in the squad room, and drinking with them in cop bars." She saw the backlog of unsolved cases, the cynicism and the humor of the homicide task force. "They come up with nicknames within seconds of something happening," Moore said. "They have funny names for their cases. They investigated a murder in which parts of a woman's body were found in a packing



Nicholas Poussin, *A Dance to the Music of Time* (detail). c. 1639-40. The Trustees of the Wallace Collection, London Credit: Bridgeman/Art Resource, NY

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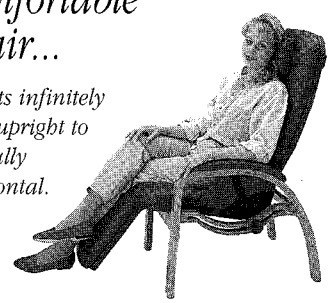

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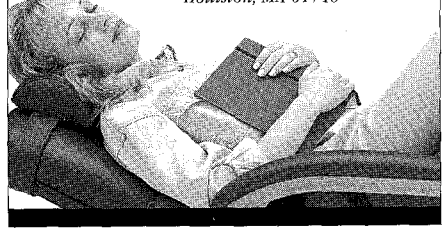

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crate. They called it Fox in a Box. They're wild, they're unsupervised, they're on their own, they have guns, they have a kind of charisma. They wear suits, and women are crazy about them—they're extremely attractive to women."

When Moore sat down to write, she wasn't sure what kind of thriller she wanted to attempt: a tale of corruption, a police procedural, a whodunit? What she ended up with, she believes, is "a love story," involving an N.Y.U. teacher of writing, who may have witnessed the prelude to a vicious murder, and Detective James Malloy, the cop on the killer's trail. Moore builds an atmosphere of thick sexual tension, and arranges for the explosive release of that tension. She also immerses the reader in the language of street cops—a peculiar amalgam of black English and black humor. And she has tapped into the deep well of female obsession with male serial killers.

Moore has dedicated "In the Cut" to Detective Tommy Hyland, one of the cops who guided her through the mayhem. Even he found her ending a little hard to take. "He was upset by it," Moore said. "But he also said, 'It's what happens.' He said it's worse than that."

—HAL ESPEN

FATHER AND SON

Shaking the faith in Harlem.

T. S. ELIOT once remarked that religious doubt is a form of faith, and perhaps the most common. The believer who doubts God's existence differs from the agnostic, who, in the words of one Catholic, is "not even that sure." In Oscar Hijuelos's latest novel, "Mr. Ives' Christmas," the hero, Edward Ives, has lived a fairy-tale life for many years. Left as a baby at a New York foundling home, he is eventually adopted by a saintly printer, who gives Ives his name and teaches him his trade. Ives grows up to become an illustrator, and meets his wife, Annie MacGuire, in a drawing class at the Art Students League. (When the model doesn't show up, she offers to pose nude.) They settle on Claremont Avenue, on the border of Harlem, and, in

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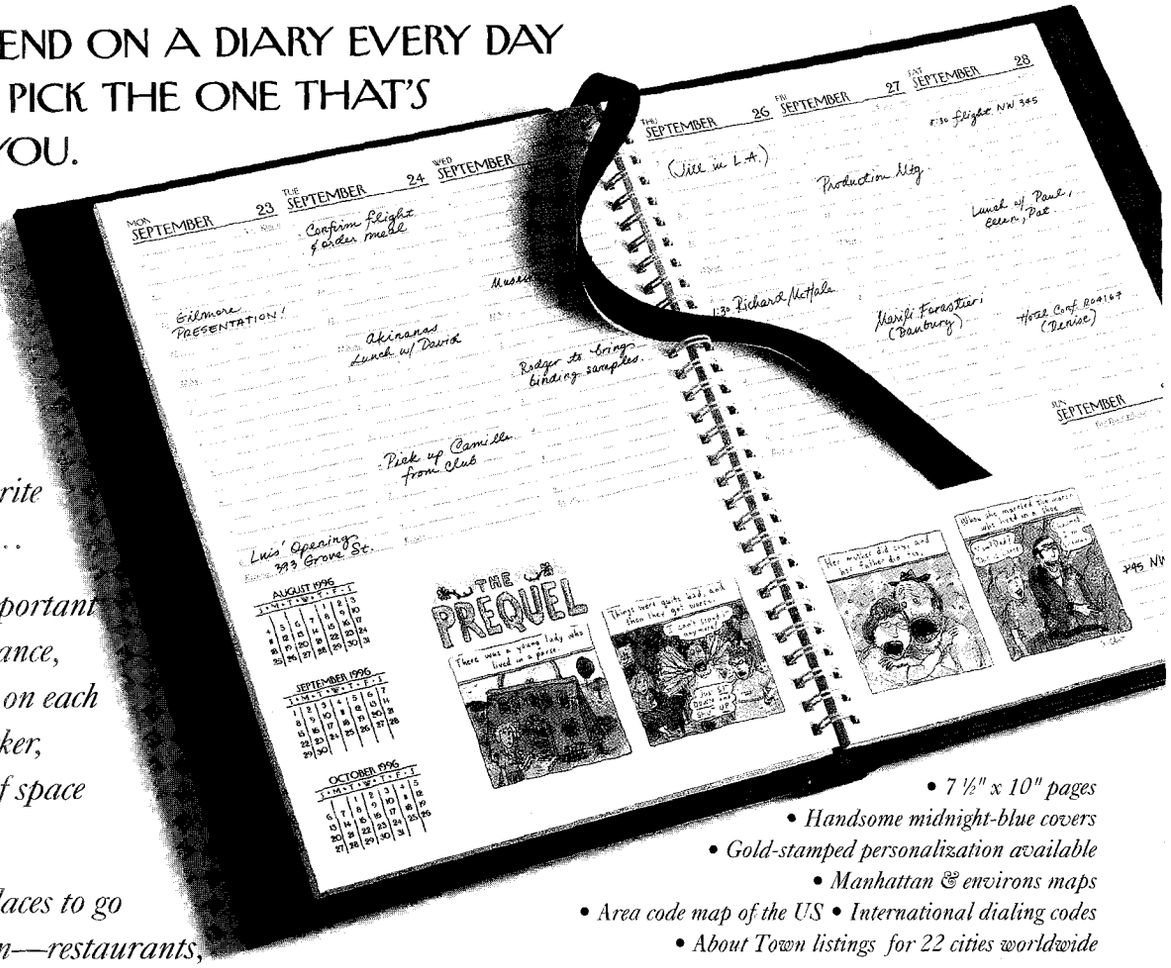

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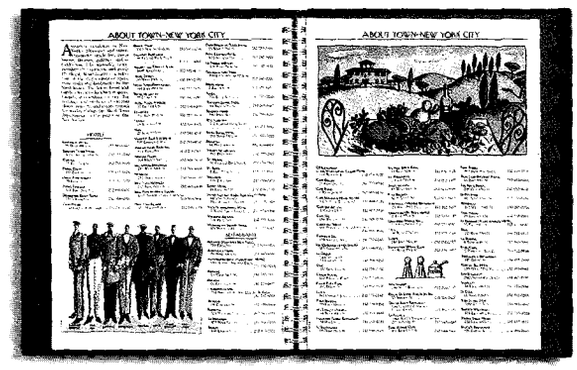

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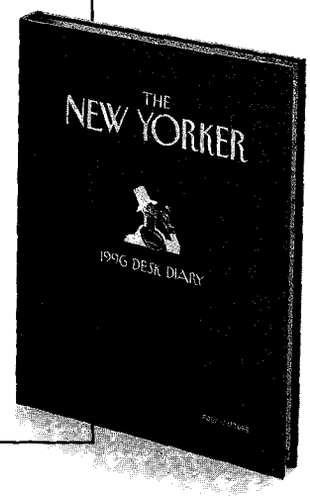

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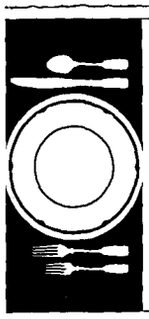

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the optimistic years after the Second World War, Ives supports his family by drawing discreetly sexy housewives for a Madison Avenue advertising firm. But then a murder destroys his well-ordered universe, and Ives becomes a member of the doubting faithful.

Oscar Hijuelos describes his new novel, due out from HarperCollins in late November, as a homage to "the Fred MacMurray world" of his youth. Hijuelos, whose novel "The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love" won the Pulitzer Prize in 1990, is the Manhattan-born son of Cuban immigrants, and is a devout Catholic. He acknowledges that religious faith, presented uncynically, has lost its lustre in certain literary circles. (His inspiration for the book, he says, was "a really mean conversation" he once had with a philosophy professor who regarded Hijuelos as "a moron for believing in God.") But he also confesses to feeling weary of the new religious fervor in the United States, which he says often manifests itself as very un-Christian intolerance: "If you don't think like we do, then fuck you!" When Hijuelos was growing up, "the real Ozzie and Harriets" weren't sitcom stereotypes but the "black folk who went to church each Sunday" in his neighborhood: "They seemed so elegant and so happy." They made religion seem cool.

Oscar Hijuelos

Hijuelos's nostalgia is not for an idyllic America that never was but for the particular and complex world of his childhood, which he imbues with fresh poignancy. He says his mother still lives in that "beautiful world, where people still care about each other," and, in a sense, Hijuelos's hopeful protagonist is the ultimate immigrant: an orphan of undetermined ethnicity, who passes, at different times, for Jewish, Italian, and Latino, and who, at least initially, believes in the American dream. Ives' name has special significance for his creator. "It is the most American of names," he explained, "evocative of old Currier & Ives prints," which he loved as a boy and still associates deeply with Christmas.

Ives' beautiful world shatters one evening in 1967, when his teen-age son, Robert, is killed after choir practice by a punk named Daniel Gomez. "What chew looking at?" Gomez asks, and pumps Robert full of bullets. While Ives tries to forgive his son's murderer—he visits Gomez's family before the trial, and later sends Gomez books in prison—his efforts exasperate his family and friends. A group of Irish buddies at the local bar take up a collection soon after the murder to hire a hit man to "pop" the killer. Ives' wife becomes distant. Even Gomez's family regards his overtures as a sham: "Mister, you really seem like a nice man, but I've got to tell you something. I feel really bad about what's happened to your son, but the fact is nobody knows who really did the shooting. You know how many kids walk around here with pistols? I feel really bad, but we don't owe you nothing."

As Ives wrestles with his faith, he has occasional visions: he sees God on Madison Avenue, and dreams of his son sledding across his favorite snowy hill, near Grant's Tomb, in Riverside Park. But these are not instances of so-called magic realism; rather, they are evidence of Ives' deep spirituality, his ability to sense life's mysteries. "Being tuned in to them, being privy to them, is a talent," Hijuelos says, one he compares to that of a musician or an artist—or a writer. "I've been fortunate to know some very holy people in my life," he said. "I had an aunt like that. She was so good. It didn't have to be announced; you didn't have to get down on your knees with the Bible in your hand preaching and yelling and carrying on. It was just there."

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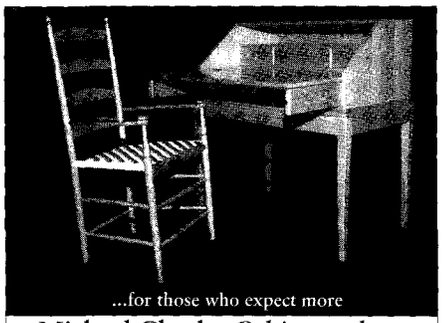

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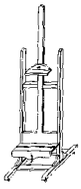

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RECOMMENDED READING

Saving Grace
by Lee Smith
(Putnam; $22.95)

Florida Grace is the daughter of Virgil Shepherd, a snake-handling self-appointed preacher who starves and sometimes abandons his many children. Of all these, Gracie is the "contentious and ornery" one who will not embrace Jesus—though she does, along the way (between the ages of seven and thirty-eight), embrace a half brother, a kindly minister, and middle-class luxury. Grace narrates, in irresistible Southern mountain tones.

The Poet Dying: Heinrich Heine's Last Years in Paris
by Ernst Pawel
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $23)

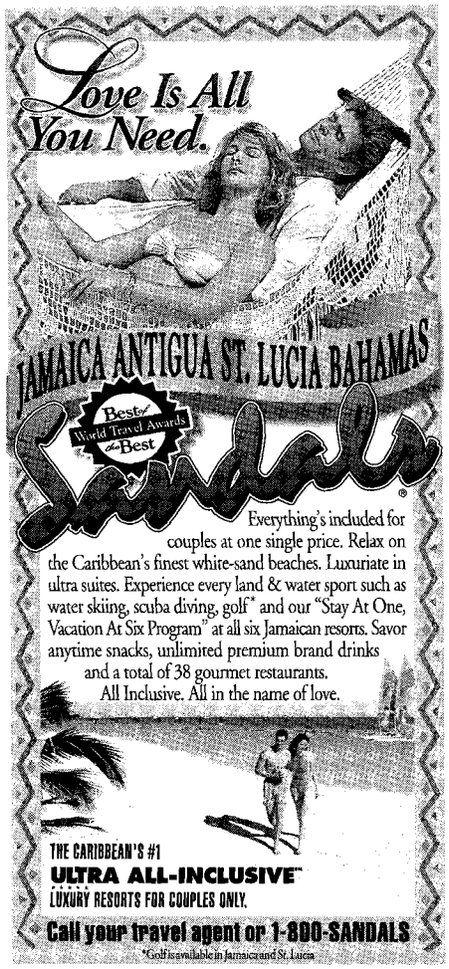
Heine, the leading German poet of his generation, had a famously terrible death. It started when he was forty-nine and took eight years, during which—paralyzed, nearly blind, racked with pain, and now and then inquired after by his young and silly wife ("She loved shopping," Pawel writes, "even more than she loved her parrot")—he produced some of his greatest poems, making them up in his head at night and dictating them to his secretary in the morning. Pawel, who was himself dying as he wrote this book, was in a position to appreciate Heine's courage, and the qualities he celebrates in Heine's work—intelligence, boldness, and a fine, grouchy wit—are also the leading traits of his own.

The Trial of Elizabeth Cree
by Peter Ackroyd
(Doubleday; $22)

Well-known but incidental Victorian "characters"—Karl Marx and the novelist George Gissing—converge in this mystery/anti-suspense fiction about a former music-hall actress, Elizabeth Cree, and her husband, an apparent serial killer. Chapters of Mr. Cree's diary alternate with transcripts of Mrs. Cree's trial for his murder and sections of third-person narrative. Ackroyd's primary interest here is the nature of storytelling and coincidence, and the parallels between an entertainer's "killing" an audience and the public's scandalized pleasure in following newspaper crime stories.

Firebrand: The Life of Horace Liveright
by Tom Dardis
(Random House; $27.50)

In Liveright's brief (1917-30), brilliant career as a publisher, he promoted then far-out moderns (T. S. Eliot, Faulkner, Nathanael West) who have since become classics. Enthusiastic, imaginative, generous, and astute, he attracted a staff



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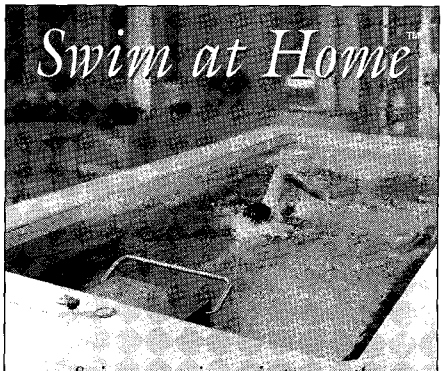

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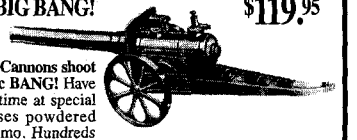

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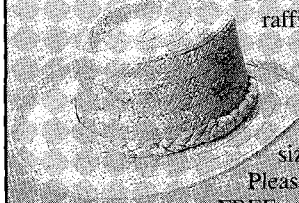

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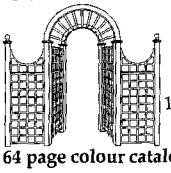

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as remarkable as his lists. But his financial recklessness and his alcoholism combined with the onset of the Great Depression to cost him his business, and he died in poverty in 1933, at the age of forty-eight. Liveright was puzzled by his self-destructiveness, and Dardis doesn't pretend to explain it: what he does—with insight and sympathy that reflect his own experience in book publishing—is portray Liveright's originality.

Rain
by Kirsty Gunn
(Atlantic Monthly Press; $15)

Part intense reverie, part unbottled confession, this first novel guides the reader through its emotional landscape as certainly as its characters move among the labyrinthine waterways of rural New Zealand. Twelve-year-old Janey, the narrator, and her five-year-old brother, nicknamed Jim Littlefish, run daily from the booze-touched rabble of their parents' parties toward the "strange freshwater tide that had slipped over the beach." Gunn's language seduces the reader just as water does the children, along a course where danger and fresh beauty are the same.

A Genius for Living: The Life of Frieda Lawrence
by Janet Byrne
(HarperCollins; $27.50)

In accounts of D. H. Lawrence's life, Frieda often looms large but remains oddly opaque: she is a caricature of herself, or a metaphor (life force, sexual storm), to be marvelled at from without. The vertiginous course of her life encourages such images—and so, in novel after novel, did Lawrence. In this new biography, Byrne combines a cool style with scrupulous research to shift our perspective: she positions us not behind Lawrence's eyes but behind Frieda's, and presents us not with a distillation of spirit but with a record of experience.

Everything and More
by Geoff Nicholson
(St. Martin's; $21.95)

"Why not structure a book like a department store?" wonders Charlie, who, like the other furniture porters at London's Haden Brothers, considers himself an artist. On another floor, the beautiful shopgirl Vita, on whom Charlie has a distant crush, shows up for an assignation with the store's owner wired to three sticks of dynamite. The store itself is riddled with undiscovered secret passageways and ornate architectural follies, while the book, whose chapters range from "Bedding" to "Mother-to-be," contains more riches than your favorite shop, and is much smarter.

Safe in America
by Marcie Hershman
(HarperCollins; $24)

Vera and Ivan Eichenbaum, the central characters in this novel, emigrated from Czechoslovakia in the twenties;

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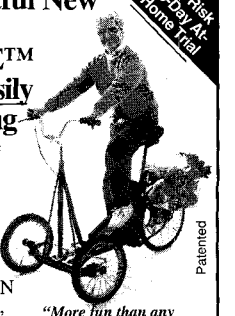

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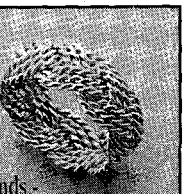

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Peculiar People
by Augustus Hare;
edited by Anita Miller
and James Papp
(Academy Chicago; $26.95)

This charmingly illustrated volume is an abridgment of a much longer autobiography that Augustus John Cuthbert Hare (1834-1903) published almost a century ago. He was a prolific and successful travel writer and something of a professional sponge. He was also a prig, a snob, and probably a crashing bore, but this book is riveting. Much of it is devoted to stories about Hare's relatives, whose deaths tend to have arrestingly bizarre causes; his sister Esmeralda, for example, died suddenly at the age of thirty-six from having swallowed, as a child, a thimble with a copper band. Hare himself was unceremoniously given away as a baby, to a recently widowed young aunt. (His mother wrote, "If anyone else would like one, would you kindly recollect that we have others.") It is impossible to blame him for the unremitting self-pity of his childhood reminiscences: another aunt, a religious fanatic named Esther, went as far as to requisition and then hang his favorite cat.

Volcano
by Garrett Hongo
(Knopf; $24)

"Volcano is a settlement in the fern and *'ōhi'a* rain forests bordering two active volcanoes" on the island of Hawaii, the author, a poet, tells us. It is also the site of the Hongo general store, a small, old-fashioned accumulation of essential stuffs: "flashlights, mousetraps, saws and hammers." Hongo grew up in Los Angeles, but he was born in the back room of that store. This is a memoir of his homecoming to a place that was never home, a natural and human history of extraordinary visual acuity.

Harvest of the Cold Months
by Elizabeth David
(Viking; $24.95)

The late Elizabeth David was considered by many to be the finest British cooking writer of this century. Here, in her last volume, she turns her prodigious knowledge and wit to the fairy-tale subject of ice—its harvest, transport, and storage, and its uses, fabulous and mundane, for cooling and confection. The result is a social history of Europe seen through a glittering lens, and written in prose so elegant it seems engraved.

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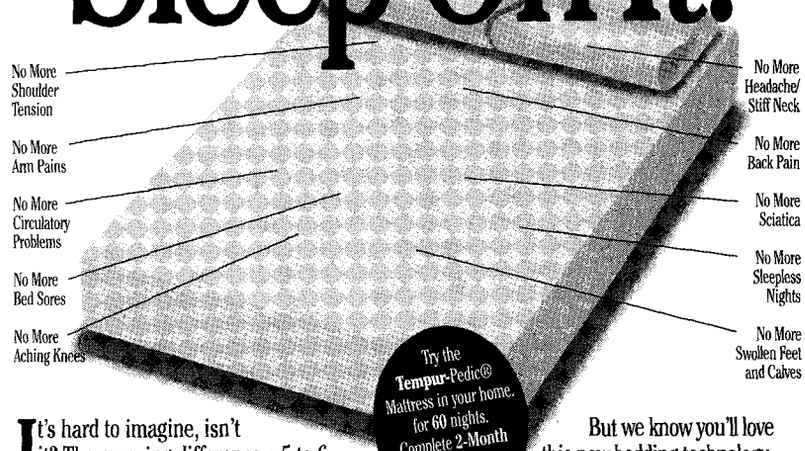

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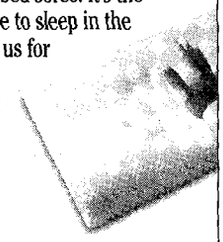

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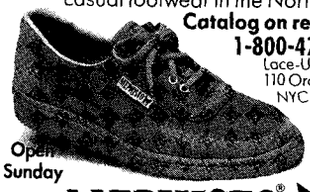

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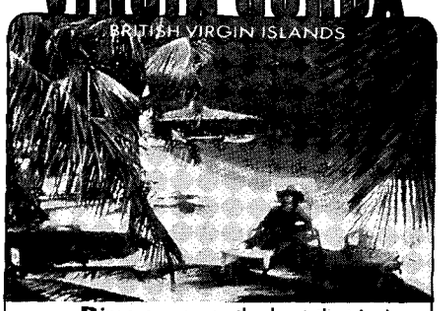

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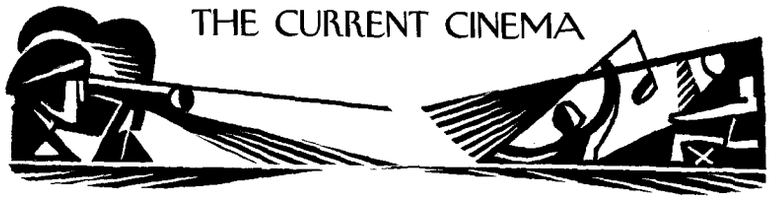

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"Beyond Rangoon" and "Dangerous Minds."

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY

IN the opening scenes of John Boorman's exhilarating "Beyond Rangoon" we follow a group of weary-looking Western travellers, led by an annoyingly chipper American guide, as they take in some of the tourist-approved sights of Burma: gleaming pagodas, a huge reclining Buddha, and the faded-splendor colonial architecture of the capital city, Rangoon. Most of the wilted pilgrims manage to appear at least mildly curious about the strangely beautiful objects they're gazing at and the glib history lesson they're listening to, but the camera draws our attention to one among them who seems incapable of even feigning interest in the tour—a young woman hiding behind dark glasses, as if pretending to be blind. She has a sleepwalker's demeanor, an opacity that suggests a numbed, shut-down spirit. What we sense in this woman, Laura Bowman (Patricia Arquette), is a profound, absolute indifference to life, and it doesn't surprise us to learn—through dialogue, flashbacks, and her voice-over narration—that she has recently suffered a devastating loss: her husband and her son were killed by burglars. It's no wonder that this trip, arranged by her well-meaning sister, Andy (Frances McDormand), isn't doing much for her, that the exotic places she's drifting through seem to affect her no more than a set of vacation slides. She's a doctor, but when she sees a boy from the tour group lying injured and bleeding on the ground after a fall, she's useless; frozen in place, she calls weakly for help and then turns away.

An agonized journey from detachment to engagement: Patricia Arquette and U Aung Ko travelling through the terror and chaos of Burma.

The story takes place in August, 1988, at a time when the political condition of Burma was deteriorating from serious to critical. A pro-democracy movement, headed by the charismatic Aung San Suu Kyi and composed largely of university students, had begun to organize demonstrations against the repressive military government that had held power since 1962, and the regime, true to its totalitarian nature, was cracking down brutally on the peaceful dissi-

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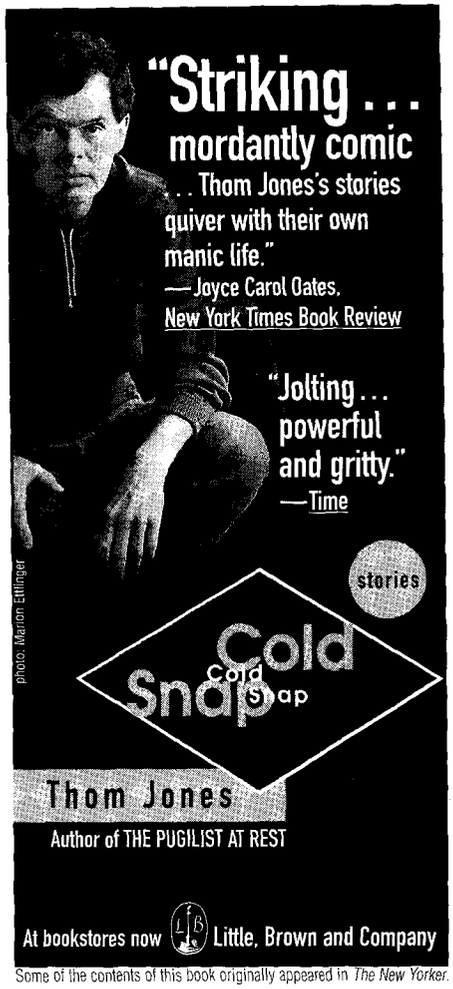
dents. In "Beyond Rangoon," circumstances conspire to separate Laura from the other tourists—that is, to set between her and them a physical distance that matches the emotional distance she already feels—and cast her into the dense, dangerous wilderness of the real Burma, where she falls into the company of political fugitives and becomes one of the hunted herself. On the tour's last night in Burma, Laura loses her passport and is forced to remain behind in Rangoon, waiting for a new one, while the rest of the group moves on to Bangkok. Wandering in the city, she meets a friendly middle-aged man named U Aung Ko (played by an actor of that name), who offers his services as an unofficial tour guide. In Aung Ko's decrepit Chevy, they drive into the countryside, bribing their way past checkpoints on the outskirts of the city. Although Laura doesn't know it yet, she's going through the looking glass into a land of terror and chaos, where the rules of free societies don't apply. It's a scary plunge, but in a sense Laura is prepared for it. The murders of her husband and son blasted away her expectations of happiness, order, and security; struggling for survival in a violent world suits her better than travelling through life as a glazed spectator seeing in every smiling face and shiny surface a cruel reflection of what she has lost.

The screenplay, by Alex Lasker and Bill Rubenstein, is constructed to emphasize the finality of the heroine's flight from one kind of life to another. It's a one-way passage; after Laura says goodbye to the other tourists at the Rangoon airport, they're gone from the movie for good—forgotten, irrelevant. "Beyond Rangoon" is an adventure story in which the intensity of the brilliantly executed action sequences is heightened by our awareness of every event's emotional significance: for the Burmese, in their quest for freedom; and for Laura, in her agonized journey from detachment to engagement. Once Laura has left Rangoon, Boorman keeps her running for her life, and the action moves so swiftly that you may not even register the moment when her shades come off; at some point, you simply realize that her eyes, through which you're seeing this ravaged, bloody landscape, aren't concealed anymore, and that the vision they provide is no longer entirely occluded by personal grief. What the movie wants to reveal to the audience is the day-to-day experience of oppression—the stifling, helpless sensation of being pinned to the ground with a soldier's boot on your neck. And the filmmakers also mean to show—or, rather, to make us feel—the process by which apparently defeated people summon the strength to resist. The heroine's deadened soul is an ideal medium for this demonstration. The film subjects Laura to a relentless series of shocks, and they gradually revive her; these jolts are what it takes to get her stopped heart beating again.

"Beyond Rangoon" is only ninety-nine minutes long, and seems shorter; it has a purposeful, arrowlike momentum that sets it apart from ordinary, one-thing-after-another adventure movies. While the picture has more than its share of thrilling, suspenseful incidents, even the most elaborately staged scenes don't function merely as spectacular set pieces. The action in "Beyond Rangoon" has a seamless unity, which is largely the product of Boorman's masterly sense of film rhythm but is also, perhaps, partly the result of his firm, unshakable confidence in the importance of this story. There aren't many filmmakers who can match Boorman's visual imagination. His best previous pictures—"Point Blank" (1967), "Deliverance" (1972), "Excalibur" (1981), and "Hope and Glory" (1987)—are, in varying degrees, extravagant displays of cinematic virtuosity; not one of them is merely style without substance, but the viewer is always conscious of the director's dazzling technique. In "Beyond Rangoon" Boorman subdues his characteristic flamboyance almost to the point of effacing himself: the storytelling is classically lucid, the images are clean and uncluttered, and the pace, though very fast, is steady. This is the most elegant piece of filmmaking he has ever done.

And, surprisingly, it may also be the most passionate. The economy of Boorman's style in "Beyond Rangoon" gives the movie a sinewy, concentrated power. Instead of pummelling us into submission, the film breaks down our emotional defenses with deft, precise combinations. Boorman avoids the most common, and most crippling, flaw of political horror movies, which is the tendency to turn the suffering of subjugated people into spectacle—to make soaring visual arias out of mass misery. In "Be-



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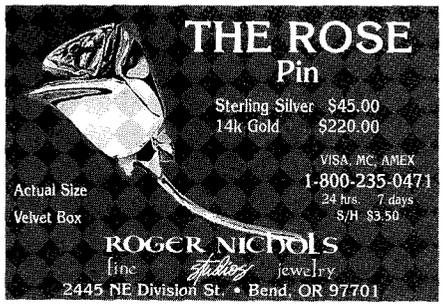

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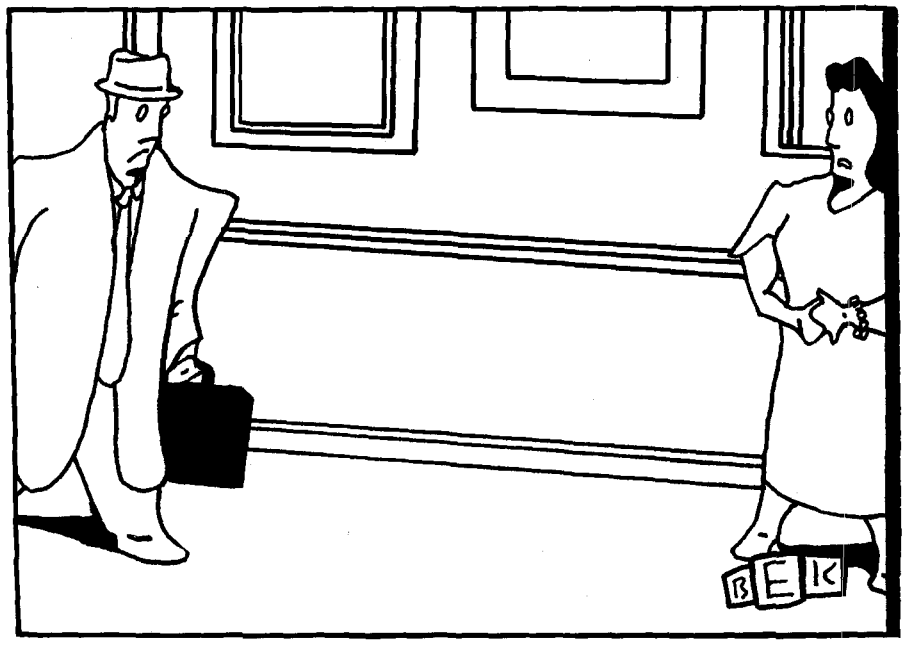
yond Rangoon," even the most gruesome acts of violence are rendered tersely, in a stunned shorthand that suggests how many more atrocities there are to be catalogued and how futile it would be to dwell on any one of them. A scene in which the government's troops open fire on student demonstrators and then shoot the nurses who rush to the aid of the wounded is over almost before you're aware of what's happening; the sequence leaves you dazed, because it denies you both the luxury of contemplation and the voyeuristic comfort of revelling in your own sense of outrage. An execution at a train-station checkpoint in the countryside is quick and startling, and ends with a brief long shot of the victim lying face down in a clearing: an indelible image of the loneliness and emptiness of death. In this picture, violence has no grandeur; it's just a terrible, suffocatingly pervasive aspect of everyday life—the polluted air that the Burmese breathe.

As the movie goes along, Laura grows out of her self-absorption. There's no time for it: danger keeps forcing her to react, like a threatened animal, and as her spirit warms up she regenerates her human will to *act*—to help the people whom she has come to know in her experience as a fugitive. The movie makes her self-transcendence seem credible, and even inevitable; the self that she's abandoning wasn't much use to her anyway. It's a demanding role, and at first Arquette doesn't seem quite up to the challenge. Her thin, girlish voice is off-putting in the early scenes, and she doesn't have the technical skills to compensate for its weakness. Her inexpressiveness is, in a way, appropriate to the character, but she's not in control of her effects: when she means to sound despondent, she sometimes just seems petulant. In this movie, though, action matters more than speech; as the story gathers steam, Arquette's performance becomes surer and more moving. Physically, she's eloquent. She looks sturdy and broad-hipped in this picture (she gained some weight for the role), and when she's running barefoot she conveys a close-to-the-ground energy that is somehow very touching. Her body suggests strength that hasn't been used in too long: when she springs into action, her movements express a fierce, desperate desire for release from everything that has confined her—she looks ready to burst. And in closeup her face is extraordinarily sensitive. Boorman photographs her as if she were a silent-movie heroine; whatever else is happening on the screen, he remembers to go back to that face, again and again, and each time he's rewarded with an expression that deepens the meaning of the scene.

The presiding spirit of "Beyond Rangoon" is Aung San Suu Kyi (Adelle Lutz), who appears in one of the



"Look, it's silly for you to come home from work miserable every day. Why don't you just stay there?"

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picture's most memorable sequences. Laura, on her last night as a tourist, awakens from a terrible dream and hears noises in the street. She leaves her hotel and makes her way through an ebullient crowd of demonstrators, many of whom hold placards bearing pictures of Aung San Suu Kyi. Soon the demonstrators begin to look toward the end of the street, and they see Aung San Suu Kyi herself—a pretty, fragile-looking woman, smiling and waving as she approaches a line of soldiers with their rifles raised. She stops briefly, looks at her enemies, and then steps calmly past them. Laura's face breaks into an amazed grin, and we understand, from this small drama of tension and relief, how Aung San Suu Kyi inspires her followers: she quickens their hopes with an unfathomable kind of serenity. In her writings the real Aung San Suu Kyi (who was placed under house arrest in 1989 and was released only a few weeks ago) has defined the goal of the democracy movement as "freedom from fear," and has described courage as "grace which is renewed repeatedly in the face of harsh, unremitting pressure." From the next day on, until Laura crosses a final border in the movie's stirring climax, she seems to be holding in her mind the image of a woman moving past a barrier. And "Beyond Rangoon" itself embodies Aung San Suu Kyi's philosophy of action. It's a mysteriously graceful adventure movie: a fearless masterpiece.

SERENITY has nothing to do with the inspirational techniques practiced by LouAnne Johnson (Michelle Pfeiffer), the heroine of John N. Smith's "Dangerous Minds." Johnson, a divorced ex-marine, teaches English in an urban Northern California high school, and her students (mostly black or Latino) are an unruly, education-resistant bunch—that is to say, a typical supporting cast for the heroic-teacher genre. (LouAnne's kids fall somewhere between the lovable streetwise cutups of "Welcome Back, Kotter" and the surly sociopaths of "The Blackboard Jungle.") The drama, as always, lies in the teacher's struggle to reach teen-agers who don't see much point in learning anything. Johnson—a real person, whose anecdotal memoir, "My Posse Don't Do Homework," is the basis of Ronald Bass's screenplay—tries everything; on this battlefield, you have to be flexible, capable of changing tactics when you find yourself losing ground. Thanks to Pfeiffer's inventive acting, "Dangerous Minds" does a fairly entertaining job of capturing the unscrupulous, guerrilla-like cunning that good teachers in bad schools often display. She'll do anything for a reaction: shock, intimidate, cajole, flirt—whatever it takes. At its best, "Dangerous Minds" gives us the pleasure of seeing teaching as a kind of comic performance art: Johnson quiets the hecklers, varies her routines, and winds up holding a tough crowd in the palm of her hand.

The movie doesn't, however, entirely solve the problems inherent in representing the educational process on the screen. Learning tends to be a painfully slow activity, but "Dangerous Minds," like virtually every example of the genre, speeds up the process; the cut-to-the-enlightenment dramaturgy feels, as it usually does, desperate and false. The picture also suffers from another ludicrous convention of classroom sagas: in the attempt to simplify the complicated, frazzling experience of high-school teaching, the movie shows Johnson interacting with only one group of students. Nice workload—one period a day. (Teachers in the audience will weep with envy, or laughter.) And in the final scenes "Dangerous Minds" makes the disastrous mistake of canonizing its heroine. After threatening to quit, she's showered with affection and praise by her students; the movie suddenly turns as sticky as "To Sir with Love." We don't need that sort of prodding to appreciate this teacher's virtues. Pfeiffer looks plenty good without the halo. ♦

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HOUSE-GUEST HELL

BY CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY

SINCE my wife and I live in Washington, D.C., where summers are bummers, we and the kids and the dog go to Maine. This insures two things: taunts about being idle Republicans, and house guests. This season's triple-digit temperatures have provided a bumper crop of calls from friends old and new, and what I have learned is that, just as the most beautiful words in the English language are "You've lost weight," the most dreaded surely are "We can only stay for a week."

I want to apologize in advance for the hasty quality of this article. I don't have time to make it very good, because I have to leave for the Bangor airport in one hour to pick up the new arrivals, and on the way I have to stop at the laundromat and drop off the twenty pounds of dirty bed linen left by the ones who've just left. Lucy, my wife, would drop them off, except she's already in Ellsworth, shopping for the hypoallergenic foodstuffs required by the incoming house guests. I'm sorry about this. For now, then, here are my notes toward a "Field Guide to the North American House Guest."

1. The Foreign House Guest from a Non-English-Speaking Country (*Domesticus aeternus helveticus*). A visitation by this variety generally coincides with an entire week of rain and fog, forcing a cancellation of all outdoor activities and necessitating uninterrupted togetherness in one living room. Indications of ennui generally begin toward the end of the fourth day indoors, with conversation taking the form of "How many brothers and sisters does your brother's new wife have?" followed by "And what are their ages?" Alternatively, "What is the principal industry of Appenzell Inner Rhodes?"

2. The House Guest Who Injures Him/Herself (*Domesticus aeternus calamitosus*). This variety is particularly prevalent among the sports-minded house guest. One *calamitosus*, having visited a host we know for a weekend, broke his ankle during a distinctly unvigorous round of Frisbee-catching. Togetherness was extended for eight days. This required a number of adjustments, including turning the master bedroom, on the first floor, into a hospital room, and attending to his every need twenty-four hours a day.

Suggested protocol for coping with *calamitosus:* As you will be providing the

injured party with all meals, and most likely in bed, you will have unobserved access to his/her foodstuffs. Halcion .25mgs. (a.k.a. triazolam or "the blue oval ones") crushed into powder and added to food can significantly reduce the house guest's demands, but hosts are advised to check with doctors for possible contraindications.

3. The Cash-Challenged House Guest (*Domesticus aeternus britannicus-journalisticus*). Easily recognized by his distinctive warble "Bloody hell, I must have left my wallet in the city." *Britannicus* is common along the eastern seaboard during the summer months, but is also apt to appear at any time of the year, anywhere, usually with little notice. Another distinctive cry is "Could I ask you to cash a cheque?" However, caution should be exercised, as the "cheques" are often drawn on unrecognizable banks, such as the Second Bank of Aran, or Unión de Crédito Agrícola de Uruguay.

4. The Telephone-Dependent House Guest (*Domesticus aeternus fiberopticus-praeferrissimus*). Closely related to *britannicus*, above, *fiberopticus* is identifiable by the telltale question—usually asked within moments of arrival—"Could I use the phone?" and, thereafter, by his habit of cheerfully miming the words "Be off in *two* seconds" as his host approaches, scowling. Tying up the telephone is not the only pitfall associated with this variety. One host reported feeling physically ill upon hearing his guest shout loudly into the telephone, as if to an overseas operator, "*Vladimir? Da. Da. Yes, I accept collect,*" and on another occasion overhearing a conversation in which occurred the words "Myanmar" and "That's ridiculous, I've only been on for an hour and forty minutes."

5. The Laptopless House Guest (*Domesticus aeternus lotus*). Key identifying phrases are "I didn't feel like lugging mine all the way here" followed by "How many megs does yours have? I'm going to need all you've got." (Important warning: *lotus* has been known to reëmerge after an hour with his host's computer, frowning and saying, "I don't understand. Your hard drive seems to be completely empty."

I should say that we like our house guests. They are good people. So if any of them should read this, do understand that this is not about you. It is about the people who came the week after you did.

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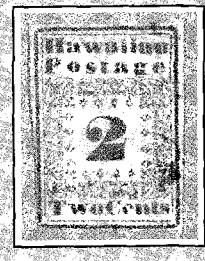

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